

**TEACHING FOR CHANGE: USING A BIBLICAL
MODEL TO EQUIP AND EMPOWER
CHRISTIAN EDUCATORS**

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ABSTRACT
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by

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The project's purpose was to develop a training model for Christian educators at Wesley Chapel United Methodist Church, McDonough, GA. that would help them to become equipped, empowered, and effective teachers. Training sessions were designed to accomplish three things: 1) create and implement a lesson plan, 2) introduce teaching methods and available models, and 3) clarify the teacher's role and call. A qualitative action research methodology was used. Ten participants worked through practical steps, which generated increased classroom participation, attendance, prepared educators, and positive feedback. Pre and post surveys, observations, and interviews were used to evaluate the project's effectiveness.

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I must acknowledge and express my love and appreciation for Wesley Chapel United Methodist Church in McDonough, Georgia and Pastor Woodrow Williams for supporting me and loving me in my educational advancement. I will always be indebted to you, the congregants, for affording me the opportunity to implement this project so that God's people will continuously be edified and God will be glorified as we continue on our spiritual journey.

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DEDICATION

To Robert Robinson II

my first and only son.

His support, encouragement, and understanding

have been so inspirational to me.

It is my prayer that as he approaches the professional stage of his life,

he will always use every opportunity to teach and mentor others.

ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|------------|-------------------------------|
| KJV | King James Version |
| NAS | New American Standard |
| ETC. | <i>et cetera</i> |
| NYTS | New York Theological Seminary |
| C.O.G.I.C. | Church of God in Christ |
| NIV | New International Version |

Christian education is that ministry that undergirds and supports all the other ministries of the church.

Dr. Jonathan Jackson

INTRODUCTION

Christian educators have played a vital role in the church's development for many years and have contributed to every aspect of the teaching ministry. Teachers have impacted the progression of the churches' Christian education ministry. Years ago, little education was used to train its leaders. After many years of failing to adequately address the educational needs of its church members, it became apparent that ministers and Christian educators had to do something that would empower their members. This project focuses on the need to equip and empower Christian educators so they can teach for effective change in the faith community. This researcher implemented this project because there is a real need to improve standards for Christian education by improving the biblical and theological literacy of the Christian educator. The researcher's emphasis is on supplying methods and techniques that will equip and empower Christian educators to become more effective in their teaching. In response to the training, the teacher will be more knowledgeable and confident in the teaching ministry of the local church. The ultimate goal is that teacher will be empowered through various methods, so that they will be equipped to help new converts understand Christian doctrines and fellow believers to grow in their faith so that the church can fulfill Christ's final command to "go and make disciples . . . and teach them."¹ Persons who teach the Christian religion, at home or in Sunday school, should themselves be taught. Christian educators should

¹ Matthew 28:19, 20 (NIV)

learn to use the best educational methods known to humankind, and should dare to think fearlessly about all aspects of the faith.² Educators can use such methods to open such fields of experience and activity to which many pupils will respond with the interest and the effort required for the mastery of materials and the conduct needed for carrying out of projects necessary for growth.

In order to be effective Christian educators, we must learn from the Master Teacher—Jesus. As a teacher, Jesus was not only a tactician with methods, but also a strategist with objectives. Jesus' greatest objective was to share with men and women that sense of union with the Father that He enjoyed. Jesus based his teaching on vital problems in the lives of his pupils. He asked and answered questions to stimulate self-expression, desiring conviction rather than persuasion on the part of his followers. He told stories with a point, which his auditors did not always understand, but which always made them think and led the spiritually minded to inquire of him their meaning. He used the principles of contrast to vivify the portrayal of truth, concrete examples to bring the abstract near, and symbols to make difficult meanings plain. Jesus used several different methods of teaching people that were extremely effective. According to Michael J. Anthony, Jesus' teaching and instructional methodology are as follows³:

First, Jesus' teaching was authoritative. Jesus taught as one who had authority and His authority was authenticated by the content of his teaching and by who he was as a person. The content of his teaching was the revelation of God, for he spoke with the words of God the Father.

² Harry G. and Betty L. Goodykoontz, *Teaching to Teach: A Basic Course in Christian Education* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1953), 31.

³ Michael J. Anthony, *Christian Education: Foundations for the Twenty-first Century* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001), 114.

Second, Jesus' teaching was not authoritarian. Jesus' teaching was not forced or imposed upon his hearers. Jesus specified the costs and demands of discipleship and encouraged his followers to make personal commitments of their choosing. Once having delivered the message, he allowed the individual to confront the truth and come to his or her own conclusions.

Third, Jesus' teaching encouraged people to think. Jesus stimulated serious thought and reflection in his teaching content. He expected his hearers to carefully consider their response to the truths he shared. Jesus expected his students to search their minds and hearts in relation to his teachings and to consider the realities of life. He encouraged others to think for himself/herself. Jesus posed questions and allowed for questioning.

Fourth, Jesus lived what he taught. Jesus incarnated his message faithfully in his life and ministry—before commanding his disciples to serve and love one another as he had loved them. Also, Jesus demonstrated the full extent of his love by washing his disciples' feet. He then further demonstrated his love by laying down his life for the world.

Finally, Jesus had a love for those he taught. Jesus loved his students, his disciples, in a way that indicated the deep longings of every heart for an intimate relationship with another person and with God.

When contemplating and planning for Christian education, we must understand the students we are going to teach. This is done by carefully examining the methods and the reasons for children and adult learning, we can help our adults, our students, as well as ourselves as seen below in Figure 1.

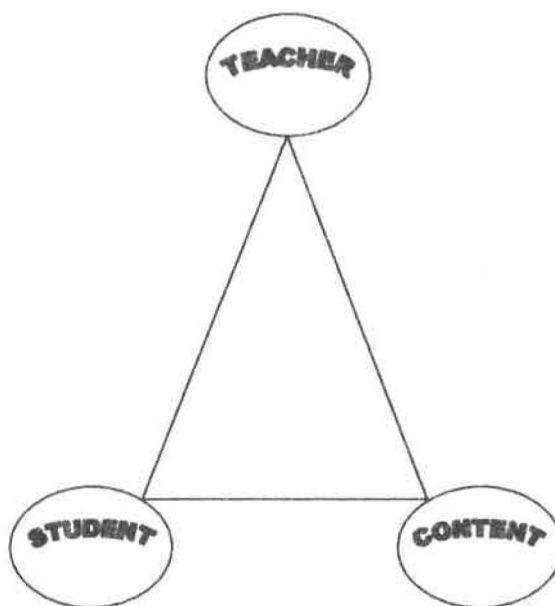


Fig. 1. Learning Connections.

According to the diagram above, the focus in teaching is learning. All that a teacher does in preparation to teach should be directed toward student's learning. Learning is gaining knowledge and understanding of the content in such a way that all of life is affected. To attempt to teach without learning taking place is an exercise in futility and a waste of everyone's time. The task of the teacher is to bring the student and the content together. Bridges of all types should be built between the content and the student in order for the best learning to take place.⁴ Christian educators must be aware

⁴ Richard E. Rusbuldt, *Basic Teacher Skills: Handbook For Church School Teachers* (Valley Forge, Pennsylvania: Judson Press, 1997), 28.

and utilize all available methods in the teaching moments, because learning takes place in different ways. Each student learns in a variety of ways.

In Marlene LeFever's book,⁵ she states that learning style can be defined as the way a student sees or perceives things best and then processes or uses what has been seen. The traditional view of learning was that all students learn the same way. Educators assumed that all students' minds processed information in the same linear pattern. This pattern became the model or teaching template for countless decades of instruction. It had the same basic steps: (1) teachers presented the information while the students listened carefully; (2) students took notes and memorized them; (3) teachers interacted with the students through teacher-directed questions and answers; and (4) students then returned the information to the teacher to prove they had learned the content of instruction. God was much more creative when he crafted our minds. Everyone has a learning style, which can be found in one of the following: collaborative, analytic, common sense, dynamic, auditory, visual, and/or tactile/kinesthetic.

The first learning style is a collaborative learner. Collaborative learners are learners who begin with what they already know, feel, or need. These learners easily share from their past experiences. They make connections with their lives outside of the classroom and bring those connections into class for everyone to discuss and examine.

The second learning style is the analytic learner. These learners enjoy answering questions such as "What new things do we need to know?" or "What does the Bible say about this issue?" The third learning style is the common sense learner. These learners build on what has gone before. They know why the subject they are studying is important and they know

⁵ Marlene LeFever, *Learning Styles-Reaching Everyone God Gave You to Teach* (Colorado Springs: David C. Cook, 1995), 29.

what the Bible has to say about it. The fourth learning style is the dynamic learner. These learners will lead the whole class in finding creative ways of using what they have learned in the classroom. The fifth learning style is the auditory learner. These learners need to hear the information. The sixth learning style is the visual learner. These learners learn best by seeing the information. The final learning style is the tactile/kinesthetic learner. Tactile refers to a sense of touch. Kinesthetic refers to large body movement that would be used in miming or playing kickball. These learners move around touching the objects. They usually examine the objects and derive with their own summary of information. Christian educators are challenged to understand and be able to identify these styles of learners during the teaching experience. When the educator is aware of the student's learning style, then the educator will be equipped and empowered to assist the student in the learning process. Christian education's overall task is about teacher preparation, which will help students in their spiritual formation.

Christian education has a purpose that ties in and supports the overall mission of the church. As the church moves to build God's kingdom by equipping and preparing people for service, and taking the Gospel message to the lost, Christian education endeavors to fulfill that mission and complete the Great Commission of Matthew 28:19-20 by "teaching them to obey everything (Jesus) commanded."

Equipping means to make ready, to prepare by giving what is necessary for the task at hand. Christian education attempts to make the saints ready for their lives of faith by providing the necessary utensils for living a life of faith in Jesus Christ in a world that does not understand who He really is or what He is really about. The proper manual for providing the needed equipment is not a quarterly curriculum or a topical book about modern Christianity. The primary resource for Christian education is the Bible. It is

through the Word that the Christian learns who God is, what God expects from his people, and how to live as He wants. Through studying, the believer not only learns to follow, but also to hear God speaking. Christian teaching calls for teachers to use the best possible educational methods, to have the best possible educational tools, to use their minds to the full capacity, and endeavor to stimulate their pupils to use their minds as well.

In religious education, we attempt “to equip God’s people for work in [God’s] service” (Ephesians 4: 12, NIV). This leads to the requirement for proper training in the skills of creative and cooperative learning. Proper training that prepares an educator will help an educator move into action. First, one needs to be oriented to other people, to become aware of others’ needs and concerns, and to reflect on ways in which God is at work through people. One example of how a person maybe able to achieve this goal is through his or her participation in teacher training or Christian education seminars. First, the important element in this process is the sense of worth. After the proper training, an educator’s task is to become equipped and empowered to help a person understand his or her own self-value and how the student views themselves in their own experience of belonging. Once a person understands that self-worth is not identified by someone else’s interpretation, then the learning process will become more focused. The second element is procedural training, which includes the tools for acquiring factual data, observation skills, and the utilization of data that can be empirically verified. This includes retention of information (memory work), seeking additional information, and relating various systems to each other, especially those of the empirical sciences and theological claims.

Christian educators need all of the above elements, plus supervision and consultation, which are practically nonexistent in many churches. Untrained teachers are a

hazard to any educational program. The program of recruiting is little understood and asking for volunteers is risky. The best programs recruit their teachers through selective invitations. Teachers are drafted because they have potential. The words of the letter of James are sound: “Not many of you should become teachers, ⁶ my brothers and sisters, for you know that we teachers will be judged with greater strictness” (James 3:1, NRSV).⁷

Our task as Christian educators is not to simply fill the room with information and then expect the Holy Spirit to do the work of applying it to the lives of our students. Our objective is not to pass along the lesson we’ve studied for the week. We need to be teaching with the clear understanding that our mission is to change the lives of those who are under our care. To ensure that life changes are taking place, there needs to be a balance between content and application.

The goal of the teacher is to impart knowledge. Teaching is a skill that must be developed for it necessitates an understanding of people and how they learn, communication concepts and practices, organizational factors, curriculum development, and similar information. In church education, the training situation is usually critical. Seldom is any teacher training required before starting. In a survey taken by Werner C. Graendorf of over one thousand churches across the United States, 15 percent indicated no leadership training programs whatever, and another 33 percent reported only a yearly meeting of some type.⁸

⁶ David R. Hunter, *Christian Education as Engagement* (New York: Seabury, 1963), 165.

⁷ Daniel Day Williams, *God’s Grace and Man’s Hope* (New York: Harper, 1949), 194-195.

⁸ Werner C. Graendorf, *Introduction to Biblical Christian Education* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1981), 84.

The Christian educator should desire to be skilled to the best of his or her ability in the art and science of teaching. Paul stated that a Christian's words and activities should be done in a most excellent manner. "And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father" (Colossians 3:17). The prepared teacher, the educator who has powers of leadership and is willing to pay the price in devotion and effort can accomplish worthy results.⁹

Wesley Chapel United Methodist Church is a predominately African American Church located in rural Henry County. Wesley Chapel is one of the many churches affected by the migration of members from all walks of life and from many different religious experiences. Many African American churches memberships have been growing so rapidly that most churches' teaching ministries have not been able to supply the numbers of Christian educators needed for an effective teaching ministry. According to James D. Smart:

The Church as a whole has failed to take education seriously as one of its functions and to interest itself in providing the best possible system of education. Men and women, members of the church, who in their community demand that their children receive the benefits of every advance in educational theory, technique, literature, and equipment, will allow the church school to limp along little different from what it was a generation earlier.¹⁰

This is a heartbreaking statement about the church, but in the twenty-first century this has become true. This migration of people back to the South has greatly effected the local congregation. The reality is that the quality of the educational program in any school is determined largely by the quality of the teaching staff. One of the requirements for an

⁹ George Herbert Betts, *Teaching Religion To-day* (New York: Abingdon Press, 1934), 252.

¹⁰ James D. Smart, *The Teaching Ministry of the Church* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1954), 70.

educator to be employed in a public school is certification. For this reason, community agencies require that volunteers receive adequate preparation for their duties. Smart states, “that when churches demand similar preparation for their educational programs and offer opportunities for thorough training to equip teachers, people are much more eager to teach than when no such training is provided.”¹¹

In order to move toward correcting this situation, a comprehensive and holistic program of Christian education, using methods, techniques, and training procedures, needs to be developed and implemented immediately. Simply put, the task of Christian education is to educate and equip Christians with the tools for effective biblical study and transferable Christian principles for application in their daily lives.¹² According to the late Dr. Jonathan Jackson, “Christian Education is that ministry that undergirds and supports every other ministry of the church.”¹³ This researcher has become focused on providing methods, strategies, and techniques that will help Christian educators become more confident and competent in their teaching ministries. Griggs argues that, “Education is what prepares children, youth, and adults to live responsible, hopeful, and productive lives. Education is the means through which teachers are equipped with the knowledge and skills to be effective communicators with those they teach.”¹⁴

The question is, how does a Christian educator first become empowered and equipped so they can go about teaching to empower and equip members for a deeper

¹¹ Ibid., 4.

¹² Tonya Burton, Minister of Discipleship, Metropolitan Baptist Church, Washington, D.C. Interview, July 10, 2002.

¹³ Jonathan Jackson, Christian Education Professor, Interdenominational Theological Center, Atlanta, Georgia.

¹⁴ Donald L. Griggs, *Teaching Today's Teachers to Teach* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2003), 11.

spiritual formation? And, what methods, techniques, and strategies are available so they can teach for change in this changing faith community that has become very diverse?

One of the greatest challenges at Wesley has been the influx of new members, but the Christian educators lack the training they need to become effective teachers. Wesley Chapel has grown from the traditional family-oriented church or generation-to-generation congregation to many different families from many denominations. The congregation is composed of families who are not related to the founding families of the church and have no connection to the family-church image. A noticeable segment of the congregation is from the community and do not have any prior church involvement. Many of the children are unchurched. The face of Wesley Chapel has changed from seasoned saints to younger congregants. The original membership is about ten percent of the congregation because of death and illness, aging members, and relocations. One reason the researcher believes that every Christian educator must receive training is because of the various behaviors and personalities that are represented in the congregation. Griggs states that, “the most important task for every church is to recruit teachers who are motivated and passionate about teaching. After recruiting teachers, the teachers must be equipped to teach by receiving training and support that will enable them to become skillful, resourceful and effective teachers.”¹⁵ The researcher and team evaluated the weekly Christian education data. They concluded that, with a church membership of 821,¹⁶ only 10%-13% of its members participate in the teaching ministry at Wesley Chapel. The researcher believes

¹⁵ Donald L. Griggs, *Teaching Teachers To Teach: A Basic Manual for Church Teachers* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1980), 1.

¹⁶ Wesley Chapel United Methodist Church: Historical Committee, 2004.

that through effective Christian education training, the educators could become more effective.

The goal of this study is to improve the teaching skills of Christian educators. Also, the researcher will introduce some of the essential ingredients of effective teaching. Teaching is a gift that involves a wish to improve the lives of others by providing information and support skills that increase their options and opportunities. Teaching skills include the ability to communicate information effectively, the capacity to develop relationships that enhance individual and group learning, and the determination to prepare oneself to teach through a lifelong course of dedicated study. As possessors of the spiritual gift of teaching, Christian educators are those who feel a call to serve Christ by teaching his people.

The researcher is a Christian educator and a teacher in this context and knows the benefits that advanced training would have for the teachers. After talking and meeting with the pastor and context associates, it was decided that the researcher would provide some methods, strategies, and techniques to a small core group of Christian educators. Those persons who would be involved in the training, the committee believed, will become more effective in their teaching skills and curriculum planning. The researcher's premise was supported by data collection from the Pre-Christian Education Survey and Needs Assessment. The findings were that 98% of the core group had no prior teacher training before they began teaching at Wesley Chapel and had never attended a teacher's training session.

As a result of working on this project, this researcher surmised that there are Christian educators who are teaching who are not equipped or empowered with methods or strategies to effectively teach for change. The objective of this project was to develop a

biblical model that will equip and empower the educators to become effective teachers, so they will be able to impact the church as well as the community.

In Chapter One, the researcher will introduce a ministry model and address why this area of ministry was chosen. The researcher will detail the events that brought her to love and become committed to Christian education through the sharing of life experiences, educational preparation, and context where she is serving and worshipping, and how these two pieces merge together in ministry.

In Chapter Two, the researcher will dialogue with a variety of literature and present some supporting works, concepts, and models of other ministries that are used to undergird this researcher's training model.

In Chapter Three, the researcher will focus on theoretical foundation models. These are linked through the use of theological, biblical, historical, and other foundations that are centered on Christian education and the methods that are available to help educators become equipped, empowered, and effective teachers.

In Chapter Four, the researcher will focus on methodology, which will be divided into subheadings: the hypothesis, intervention (description of ministry project), research design, measurement, and instrumentation.

In Chapter Five, the researcher will focus on the field experience of the researcher. This chapter will detail the actual implementation of the project, the data collection methods used, and its findings.

Chapter Six will serve as the chapter for reflections, summary, and conclusion. This will give the researcher the opportunity to express whether she feels the project was a success or not and whether recommendations for further research and training should be made.

CHAPTER ONE

MINISTRY FOCUS: THROUGH IT ALL

The local church in modern times must address the need for a unifying center in communal life.¹ A narrow concern for personal survival and a fortress mentality can emerge that isolates persons. The church must address the genuine needs of food, clothing, and shelter, but an educational agenda must also emphasize the Christian responsibility to care for the world as God's creation and the stewardship of resources beyond the maintenance of any personal, family, or national fortress. Christian education efforts must seriously evaluate the extent of which persons are encouraged to grow in their personal relationship with God. Christian education must address the areas of moral and ethical character formation to supplement intellectual training, but not in a way that violates the worth and dignity of persons as God's creatures. How this balance is achieved presents a continual problem in the actual practice of education.

The Call: "I will go"

Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were
born I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations.
Jeremiah 1: 5 (NIV)

¹ L. Shannon Jung and Mary A. Agria, *Rural Congregational Studies: A Guide for Good Shepherds* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1997), 28.

It was in Daisy, Georgia in September 1954, when my journey started. The researcher is the middle child in the birth order of five children born to Woodrow and Edna Bertha Williams. Also, there is a stepbrother who is the eldest of the six children. The sibling makeup is a brother and sister older and a sister and brother younger.

The researcher and her family had a very humble beginning. Her father's occupations included working as a sharecropper and a fruitcake factory supervisor, and mother's occupations included factory worker and a nursing assistant at a local hospital.

The researcher's father was a Deacon and her mother was a Deaconess at Saint Luke Baptist Church in Daisy, Georgia. The family attended church service whenever the doors were open. Her mother and father believed in Proverbs 22:6, NIV, "Train up a child in the way he or she should go and when they are old they will not depart from it." On Sunday nights, the family attended a Pentecostal Church in Bellsville, Georgia. At this church, the researcher would dance and sing, while loud horns and drums would be playing. The researcher loved this church. This is where the love for the teaching ministry became engrained in her life.

By the time this researcher turned nine years old, she knew that God wanted to be Lord of her life. In August, during a revival meeting on Friday night, she gave her life to Christ. On that Sunday morning, the pastor baptized her in a creek. The strangest thing happened; the pastor dropped her in the creek during baptism. He said, "in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost," and the researcher fell out of the pastor's hands. He was looking for the researcher in the creek and she stood up yelling "he tried to drown me." The saints were on the banks singing and dancing all over the place. This researcher started to search the Scriptures to understand the teaching on baptism. At this time in her life, ministry became her focus.

Growing up in rural South Georgia where women were not recognized as being called into ministry was difficult for the researcher. She knew that there was a calling on her life at the age of nine. The researcher did not understand what was happening to her. This calling became so intense that she just had to teach, preach, and sing. While playing in the woods, the researcher would build a make-believe church out of branches, sticks, and cans. The members of the church were empty cans, the microphone was a stick, and branches were placed down as the pulpit area. The researcher would teach, preach, and sing until she would get happy. Sometimes the Holy Spirit would become so forceful until she would be overcome by this power and she would fall to the ground. Later, she would get up to her feet. Also, some mornings the researcher would wake up teaching, preaching, and singing and the researcher could recall the Scripture that she read in her sermon and the words to the songs that she sung.

By the time the researcher turned eleven years old, she was stricken with an illness that left her paralyzed on the left lower extremities. She stayed in the hospital for two weeks and was sent home with no improvement. One Sunday night, the researcher and her family went to the Pentecostal Church. Something happened and the researcher was able to walk again. At this time in the researcher's life, the call on her life was so great.

Later in her teen years, the researcher started traveling around the state of Georgia singing as a soloist and speaking on programs and platform services. She was always told by the pastor to stay on the floor and not to go into the pulpit.

A turning point in the life of the researcher was when she was transferred from Evans County High School to Claxton High School. She attended Evans County High School until the 11th grade, and then she was moved to an all White school, Claxton High School. During mid morning announcements the principal came over the loud speaker and

announced that buses would be picking the students up and transporting them to a new school. When the researcher arrived at Claxton High, there were men dressed in helmets, breastplates, and carrying guns. Each bus was unloaded and the students were escorted into school. These men stood in the hallways the entire school day holding their guns. At graduation, Claxton High changed the grade point average to a 93%. This was done to limit Blacks from graduating with honors. At the time, the researcher did not realize that this was a subtle way of racism. For this researcher, this was a very painful time because the students from Evans County High School were labeled to be inferior to Whites. At this point of the researcher's journey, God helped her to realize that right will always win out. During the graduation ceremony, there were more Black students graduating with honors than White students.

Although the researcher experienced many difficult times during her high school days, she was able to share in some of the school's activities including chorus, the 4H Club, and the Debate Club. She received honors and was selected as the student "Most Likely to Succeed." These events had a profound effect on her and merely authenticated what she had been called to do early in her life.

Tragic Starts Early

During the summer of 1970 at the age of fifteen, there was a severe tragedy. It was early morning when the researcher's father became very ill. Her father was rushed to the hospital and was diagnosed with a rare kidney disease that caused the researcher's father's organs to shut down. When her mother returned home and said, "the doctors can't do anything for him and her father is going to die," the researcher thought her world had come to an end and she did not want to live any longer. Her father was her whole world.

There was little support from her older siblings because they were away at college and a half brother was not introduced to the family. For two weeks, she watched her daddy's body, mind, and spirit "die." Her father was a good, strong, tall, robust man who was full of life. The most tragic part of the researcher's father's illness was watching him deteriorate and not be able to do anything to save him. Her father's illness affected his mind and he became very confused and delusional. After the passing of her father, she wanted to find a cure for kidney disease.

The researcher was able to finish high school and, at seventeen years of age, the researcher enrolled at Savannah State College (now university) as a pre-medical student. Her major was Medical Technology with a minor in Chemistry. After one year at Savannah State, her medical scholarship was cut and she had to leave college. Her mother did not have any money to help her to stay in school. In 1973, the researcher thought she was doing the next best thing and that was to get married at 19.

Her husband was a tall, good-looking, bow-legged man. He worked on the waterfront and wasn't home much. One night, her husband came into the home acting strange; his behavior was different. He left home and returned some hours later. He became very abusive. This was the most devastating, life-changing tragedy of them all, because this part of the researcher's life left her angry, hurting, bleeding, infected, bruised, and confused. The only thing she knew was that God was with her.

New Beginnings

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised; To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.

(Luke 4:18-19 (NIV))

In May 1974, in an effort to distance herself from the humiliating events of her past, the researcher moved to New York. The hurt, guilt, shame, and the pain, still were with her. The saving grace was that she was needed. Her cousin's wife was dying. He had a two-and-a-half year old son. The researcher became a workaholic. Her cousin's wife died in August 1974. At this point on her life, she started attending church once again.

After running and refusing to preach or teach, she decided that it was time to accept her call into the ministry. The beginning years in ministry had been full of roadblocks and tears. The researcher accepted the call into ministry in 1974 and she united with Bethel Baptist Church, Mount Kisco, New York. The deacons told the researcher that they would help her get trained, but she could not preach at the church. She was allowed to teach Sunday school classes. After much prayer, the researcher enrolled in Bible school and received her degree from Newburgh Bible Institute. Later, she enrolled in New York Theological Seminary (NYTS) and received a Certificate in Theology. After completing the course of study at Newburgh Bible Institute and NYTS, Bethel still denied her the opportunity to preach, but allowed her to teach in Sunday school and Bible study. Although, the researcher was allowed to exercise one of the gifts, she believed that God was calling her into a pastoral role. This was a very painful time in her ministry.

In 1983, the researcher remarried and moved to Connecticut. During the early part of her move to Connecticut with her husband, the researcher united with a church that was Church of God in Christ (C.O.G.I.C.). This experience was a good one; however, the church did not support women in ministry. The researcher was at a point in her life where she knew God was calling her into a teaching, preaching ministry. The researcher had to answer the call.

In 1988, five years after moving from New York, the researcher and her family returned to New York and to Bethel Baptist Church. After one year of serving, nothing changed with the church's attitude toward accepting her into the preaching ministry. After months of fasting and praying, God granted the researcher permission to unite in membership with Antioch Baptist Church, Bedford Hills, New York. It was at Antioch in 1992 that God spoke to the Angel of the church to grant her permission to do her Trial Sermon. The researcher had to wait for one year before she could do her Trial Sermon. The day finally arrived in July 1993 when she was licensed into the Gospel Ministry. It took a total of twenty years from the initial call to the Trial Sermon. The researcher remained a member and an Associate Minister at Antioch for five years before she relocated to Georgia.

When the researcher arrived back in Georgia on Labor Day weekend in 1998, after living in the Northern states for 26 years, she united with Zion Hill Baptist Church under the leadership of Dr. Aaron L. Parker, which is located on the Southwest side of Atlanta. The researcher became an Associate Minister and member in November 1998. The pastor talked with her a lot. He was always concerned with what the voice of the Lord was saying to her. She moved very quickly into leadership roles in Zion Hill.

After getting settled back in the researcher's home state after living in the north for twenty-six years, another tragedy struck. After rejoicing with her husband for their anniversary over the phone, ten hours later the tragedy struck. Her husband had a massive heart attack and died on the scene. On October 16, 1998, the researcher's husband went home to be with the Lord.

There were many dark days for the researcher and her son and then another tragedy happened. On April 18, 2000, her mother was called home to be with the Lord. The researcher's mother died from a lung condition. Struggling with two deaths within one year and five month period, yet another tragedy happened. Within three months, July 2000, of the researcher's mother death, the researcher's godfather was called home to be with God. Her godfather died of a massive heart attack. Through these dark days, God was getting her ready to be elevated into a higher calling.

In July 2001, Reverend Dr. Aaron L. Parker, pastor at Zion Hill Baptist Church, announced that the researcher would be ordained. This milestone happened after 28 years in ministry. The researcher became the first daughter in ministry of Pastor Parker and Zion Hill Baptist Church. At this time the church was 129th years old. Pastor Parker saw something in the researcher that no other Angel of the church had seen. One thing the researcher will always hold dear in her heart was when Pastor Parker allowed her to preach one of the church's opening revival nights.

At a time when the researcher was being renewed, another tragedy happened. In June 2002, the researcher's uncle went home to be with the Lord. The researcher was very close with her uncle and was her uncle's legal guardian. Although, the researcher has been through some challenging days, God has blessed this researcher to accomplished so much.

A special place for this researcher will always be Mount Kisco, New York, because the researcher met a wonderful man by the name of Robert T. Robinson and married him on October 15, 1983 and she was allowed to exercise her gift of teaching. A few weeks later in October 1983, the researcher and her husband moved to Waterbury, Connecticut. In 1984, a son was blessed to this union, Robert T. Robinson II. Robert was born with Cerebral Palsy that affected the fine motor coordination part of the brain. Robert had major medical challenges. The one thing the researcher knew was that the Spirit of the Lord was with her family. The researcher and her husband had many difficult days, but through therapy and prayer, Robert overcame those challenges. Eighteen years later, after hearing doctors say that Robert would not be able to play a musical instrument, he is now playing four instruments. Also, Robert is enrolled into Florida A & M University and is part of the Florida A & M Marching "100" Band.

Accomplishments

The researcher matriculated at the Interdenominational Theological Center, Atlanta, Georgia and studied from January of 1999 to May of 2002 at Morehouse School of Religion. In May 2002, she graduated with several accomplishments and degrees. Her major was Psychology of Religion and Pastoral Care and earned both a Master of Divinity and a Master of Arts in Christian Education. The researcher enrolled in the doctoral program at United Theological Seminary, Dayton, Ohio where she earned a Doctor of Ministry degree in the area of Christian Education & Urban Ministries.

Presently, the researcher is an Associate Minister and member of Wesley Chapel United Methodist Church, Inc. in McDonough, Georgia. She changed from the Baptist denomination to the United Methodist in September of 2002. One of the reasons the

researcher made a change in denomination was because the United Methodist denomination embraced female ministers in the role of ministry. Once again, the call on the researcher's life was still very strong and more focused in the area of pastor/leader. The calling never left the researcher.

Some of the researcher's duties at Wesley Chapel included Nurture Coordinator, Associate Pastor, pastoral care and counseling, and visitation. Ministries that were assigned under her leadership as Nurture Coordinator were all of the age level ministries (i.e., Seniors, Singles, Youth, Children, Young Adult, and Adult), Church School Superintendent, Christian Education, Membership, New Members Secretary, Race and Religion, and Nursery/Children Church. Her teaching tasks include Bible Study, New Member's class, Confirmation class, Women classes, Sunday school, and Summer Enrichment classes. Also, the researcher is a former special needs teacher of students with emotional behavior disorders for Fulton County School System. Presently, the researcher is working for Georgia State Department of Juvenile Justice in Atlanta, Georgia.

In October 2005, the researcher became a Certified Candidate in the United Methodist Church. Also, she is ordained as a Baptist minister. She knows that God has placed on her life the gift and call to pastor and teach. The researcher has heard and understands the great commission, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen," Matthew 28: 19-20 (NIV).

The Context

Wesley Chapel United Methodist Church is a predominantly African American congregation located in McDonough, Georgia with a membership of 821, which breakdown to 50.8% female and 49.2% male, and less than two percent other ethnicities. Also, the household concerns have changed to finding a church which has strong spiritual teaching, parenting skills classes, a pastorate that address local school issues, divorce, and basic family needs (i.e. food program, clothing bank, and etc.)

Wesley Chapel is governed by an Episcopacy system, which means a Bishop and a District Superintendent. In addition, Wesley Chapel is a member of the North Georgia Annual Conference in the Griffin District. Wesley Chapel operates under an Administrative Council structure that addresses the areas of leadership, evangelism, outreach ministries, stewardship, fiscal responsibility, and the concerns of the faith community.

Context History

Wesley Chapel United Methodist Church has a rich history. In 1867, four years after the Emancipation Proclamation, our church officially came into being. Our name changed several times from Kent Chapel Methodist Episcopal Church (1873-1927) to John Wesley Methodist Episcopal Church (1927-1940) then to Wesley Chapel Methodist Episcopal Church (1940-1960); and finally to Wesley Chapel United Methodist Church (1960).

Wesley Chapel/Kent Chapel has been blessed with twenty-five historical leaders. Several of these leaders developed a burning desire to build a Meeting House. An

organizational meeting for Wesley Chapel was held at a location that was 1.5 miles South of McDonough, on the property of Brother Lowe Tomlinson. The first church building, as crude as it was, was erected on this property.

On June 12, 1873, the Trustees of this newly organized church were able to purchase two acres of land from Quince R. Nolan of Henry County for the sum of \$45.00. The Trustees making this purchase were Rueben Harper, David Laney, Lewis Hardy, Anthony Cleveland, Green Banks, Robert Lemon, Ephraim Weathers, Willis Seagar, and Thomas Collins.

The original name of Wesley Chapel was Kent Chapel Methodist Episcopal Church named in honor of Brother C. A. Kent, one of the founding fathers and the first official pastor. It was under his ministry that the church acquired the Macon Street property site from Quince R. Nolan. The original structure, a wood frame, built on this site was destroyed by a storm. Upon completion of a second structure, the church was renamed John Wesley Methodist Episcopal due to the impact of the Founder of Methodism.

During the 1880's, John Wesley Methodist Episcopal Church was a one-room building, which consisted of a choir stand, pulpit, and a bell tower, which housed one of the largest bells in Henry County. This bell was housed in the Macon Street structure. In 1922, the present church building was designed and erected under the pastorate of Rev. P. H. Travis.

A New Era

In 1992, a Building Fund Chairperson and committee was nominated and approved. Plans were then generated to motivate the congregation and to bring in the necessary funds to build an adequate facility for the Wesley Chapel of the future.

In 1994, the Building/Renovation Program was revamped with a building pledge program. During this program, a survey was ordered to pinpoint our church and its relationship to the community. During 1998, a new parsonage was purchased at 1376 Lake Forest Lane in Lake Haven Subdivision in McDonough and the old church parsonage was converted into office space and meeting rooms.

After being given permission from the Annual Conference, a Church Conference was held. On Sunday, October 25, 1998, a vote was taken to relocate. The church voted overwhelmingly to relocate. On December 28, 1998, a vote was taken to buy ten acres of land at 397 Racetrack Road. This vote was unanimous and on October 25th, Wesley purchased five acres of land and five acres were donated.

During 1999, the contract for the land purchase was signed, later paid in full, and a sign identifying the spot of the new church was placed on the property. In May 2001, a building pledge program was re-implemented and the architectural plans for the new facility were completed. In February 2002, the construction loan was approved and the Planning and Zoning Board of Henry County approved the construction plans for the new facility.

On Tuesday, May 7, 2002, a Groundbreaking Ceremony was held at 397 Racetrack Road. The event was witnessed by the members of the Annual Conference, District Representatives, Local Churches, McDonough City Officials, Wesley members,

and friends. On Thursday, December 19, 2002, a Steeple Raising Ceremony was held at 397 Racetrack Road. On Sunday, February 16, 2003, Wesley Chapel held the Dedication Service for its new sanctuary.

Demographics

McDonough, Georgia is located in the rural Southwest part of Henry County on the South side of Metro Atlanta, which is approximately 33.2 miles south of Georgia's capital with a population of 31,460 people. McDonough is one of the fastest growing rural communities in Metro Atlanta with a projected five (5) year population change of 28.1%, which is a 5.3% increase over the 2003 population. The fastest growing ethnic groups are the Hispanics and Latinos and non-Anglo population of 25%. The McDonough community has a 33% of households with faith involvement and an average age of 33.3 years of age. McDonough is middle to upper class community with an average income per household of \$75,878 per year. The family structure is 26% two-parent households with college graduates making up 22% of those households.

McDonough has experienced a 162.7% increase since 1998. The largest generational groups represented in terms of numbers are the Boomers (age 35 to 54) comprising 8,800 persons or 33.2% of the total population in the area. While 76.0% of the population aged 25+ have graduated from high school. College graduates account for 24.0% of those ages 25+ in the area.

CHAPTER TWO

THE STATE OF THE ART IN THIS MINISTRY PROJECT

Education is what prepares children, youth, and adults to live responsible, hopeful, and productive lives. Education is the means through which teachers are equipped with the knowledge and skills to be effective communicators with those they teach.¹

In the twenty-first century, for the faith community (church) to keep up with the increased church growth, which includes diverse cultures moving into our communities and cross-denominationalism, there must be improvement of teaching in the Sunday school. This is one of the most pressing problems facing our churches today. Our teachers are the ones who are aware of their own limitations and are urgently requesting for guidance and help to be able to meet the needs of God's people. Christian educators are aware that Sunday school has become an important and integral part of the life of our churches. Part of a Christian educator's task in spite of the size of the church is to lead children, young people, and adults in a study of the Bible, seeking together to understand its meaning and significance for Christian living. Jesus' teaching can provide the Christian educator with a new perspective for his or her ministry today. Roy Zuck states, "we can incorporate some of the effective teaching principles and practices Jesus masterfully modeled."²

¹ Donald L. Griggs, *Teaching Today's Teachers to Teach* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2003), 10.

² Roy Zuck, *Teaching as Jesus Taught* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1995).

As Christian educators, we can celebrate how “Jesus was the Master Teacher in relation to the context, content, and persons of his teaching ministry. As the Master Teacher, Jesus continues to transform people today just as he did in the first century. Jesus is a model for all those who are called to teach.”³ As Lois E. LeBar succinctly states:

Christ Jesus was the Master Teacher par excellence because He Himself perfectly embodied the truth . . . He perfectly understood His pupils, and He used perfect methods in order to change people. He Himself was “the way, the truth, and the life” (John 14:6). He knew all men individually and He knew human nature, what was in man generically.⁴

The Sunday school of the early nineteenth century began with the single aim of teaching the Bible. Religious education began with the rise of the Sunday school in the early part of the nineteenth century and reached its highest level with the insights of Horace Bushnell who in 1847 wrote the first two chapters of *Christian Nurture*. Bushnell was not taken seriously for another fifty years and during this time most religious education was under-graded and Bible-centered, with little concern for the capacities or the growing edges of the pupils.

When Bushnell’s insights were finally considered, they were for the most part misunderstood or divorced from the basic presupposition of the part that parents must play in the religious development of the child.⁵ Progressive education began its influential career among the leaders of secular education. It took a theological analysis to put Christian education back on the right track.

³ Michael J. Anthony, *Christian Education: Foundations for the Twenty-first Century* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001), 115.

⁴ Lois E. LeBar, *Education That is Christian* (Old Tappan, New Jersey: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1958), 51.

⁵ Horace Bushnell, *Christian Nurture* (New York: Scribner’s, 1890), 10.

With this background in mind, we need also to note briefly three considerations of Christian education before we look at it as a theological discipline and method. The first is the rediscovery of the function of the family as a primary agent of Christian education. From the history of Judaism, the family (father) was the primary teaching agent of the children. Religious teaching began in the home with a form of traditionalism that was indeed the communication of ways of knowing, ways of being, and ways of doing. The children learned what God had done and was continuing to do for them. The children learned how they should live.

The second consideration is the rediscovery of the function of the total church in a comprehensive educational program. At first, this was a sociological discovery involving the cooperation of all individuals and organizations in the parish educational program. But it soon revealed theological implications. One crucial insight was that parish life could be a means of redemption, where persons are taken from their status of alienation and restored to fellowship within the community.

The third consideration has been with us since the turn of the century and G. Stanley Hall. This consideration states that children are not little adults but are developing organisms with growing edges, which must be stimulated and directed. These three considerations indicated the significance of the basic problem, which is to find out how Christian education is to be a theological discipline and method. This means that Christian education must be defined theologically. Evangelicals have had a predisposition to emphasize a theological approach in education over against one that highlights the social sciences.

The question becomes, what is Christian education? Christian education is ministry. According to Israel Galindo, "Christian education has the potential beyond any

other congregational influence to deepen faith and commitment.”⁶ For this researcher, Christian education in its simplest form is the process by which people are prepared to become effective disciples of and witnesses for Jesus Christ.

Vieth argues that Christian education is the process by which persons are confronted with and controlled by the Christian gospel. It involves the effort of the Christian community to guide both young and adults persons toward a richer possession of the Christian heritage and a fuller participation in the life and work of the Christian fellowship. It is both individual and social in nature. It is individual, because it deals with persons, and each person is unique and different from all other persons. It is social because it seeks to relate persons to the Christian community and to transform community life toward an ever fuller embodiment of Christian ideals. It is concerned with the past, the present, and the future—with the past, because it seeks to introduce persons to their religion as a vital force in every response of life; with the future, because it cultivates creative experience leading to growth in wisdom and stature and favor with God and man.⁷

For Christian education, the question then becomes, “What is a Christian?” According to the concordance of *The Westminster Study Edition of The Holy Bible*, a Christian is “one who by faith in Christ as his Savior and Lord enters into fellowship with God, becomes a member of the body of Christ, and in the power of the Holy Spirit bears witness to Christ by word and life.”

One of the definitive aspects of being a Christian indicates that the Christian needs the church and the education it gives him or her, for it is the church that educates him/her

⁶ Israel Galindo. *The Craft of Christian Teaching: Essentials for Becoming a Very Good Teacher* (Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1998), 1.

⁷ Paul H. Vieth, *The Church and Christian Education* (Minneapolis: The Bethany Press, 1947), 52.

as a Christian. The teaching function is an indispensable responsibility of the church, but not the church's only function.

As one engages in the exercise of the gifts of prophecy, serving, teaching, exhorting, contributing, giving aid, and doing acts of mercy and in the apostolic, prophetic, evangelistic, pastoral, and teaching functions, he/she is a member of the body of Christ. The members are in unity and at work continuing Christ's ministry in the world. Along with other indispensable functions, teaching (education, the teaching-learning process) is one of the functions of the community of faith.

The teacher engages in a shared ministry. The ministry is shared with others engaged in other ministries that will be coordinated in the total mission and ministry of the church. The ministry is shared with other teachers working in the church and on behalf of the church. The ministry is shared with learners in a fellowship of work and worship involving leaders and followers. James D. Smart states, "The church of Jesus Christ has, of necessity, a teaching function. The church must teach, just as it must preach, or it will not be the church. Teaching belongs to the essence of the church and a church that neglects this function of teaching has lost something that is indispensable to its nature as a church. It is a defective church if it is lacking at this point, just as a church in which the gospel ceases to be preached in its purity or a church in which the sacraments cease to be rightly administered is a defective church."⁸

One of the key components for education is that it entails conscious planning, implementing, and evaluating of educational experiences. Christian education involves the

⁸ James D. Smart, *The Teaching Ministry of the Church* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1954), 11.

effort to share biblical content, to grapple with its implications for life, and to suggest avenues for appropriate response.

Lawrence O. Richards has recently advocated this approach whose conceptions have clarified the non-informal and informal aspects of education.⁹ Richards assumes that the values of formal education will be implicitly addressed in the Christian community. It is clear that these values need to be planned in educational ministries that enable persons to move beyond a community norm in a prophetic sense, as well as nurturing them in the ways of a particular community. Prophetic education calls persons and communities to be accountable to biblical norms and demands at points where sin, injustice, and oppression are evident, where the life of the home or nurturing community is critiqued rather than affirmed.

Michael J. Anthony further states, "To accept a position of ministry requires that the person be willing to be trained to do that ministry correctly. The tragedy is that many churches do very little if any training for their ministry positions. Recent surveys indicate that most churches are so involved in finding people for ministry positions that they have no energy left to provide the training and equipping necessary for effective ministry."¹⁰

Since most churches have a chronic need for more teachers, they usually set the entry requirements too low. Often, mere interest in teaching qualifies a person to teach. Once in that position, teachers can fall victim to inflated egos and forget their need for continual training. They have a spirit that hinders them from developing excellence in teaching. Teachers must come to a fresh consciousness of the worth of each individual and

⁹ Lawrence O. Richards, *Creative Bible Teaching* (Chicago: Moody, 1970).

¹⁰ Michael J. Anthony, *Christian Education Foundations for the Twenty-first Century* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House), 173.

to a new awareness of the importance and centrality of the pupil in the teacher-learner process. According to Bowman, “A teacher does not teach a class or group. He or she works with individuals, who may gather at times in classes or groups. Each individual is unique in God’s sight. They should be so in the teacher’s sight.”¹¹

According to Eugene C. Roehlkepartain, teachers are like the narrow neck of an hourglass: Everything passes through them. When they are effective, learning flows freely and steadily. When they are ill equipped learning can be clogged up or only trickle through ineffectively.¹² This researcher argues that teachers who teach in public school systems versus teachers who teach in the faith community have different expectations. Teachers who are teaching in public school are required to be trained. Most Christian education teachers are not professional educators. For their living, they may sell real estate, design computers, manage companies, work in a factory, or work at home. Whatever they know about teaching likely comes from their own experience as a teacher or student. Instead of blaming teachers for their shortcomings, churches need to begin training teachers and equipping them for this ministry to which they have been called. In *How to Prevent Lay Leaders Burnout*, Roy Oswald argues that training is an essential element of working with volunteers:

The function of training is not only to equip people with skills. Through training, they gain understanding of the demands of the task. Even more important, training is a way of offering support. People are brought into the leadership group to discuss aspects of

¹¹ Clarice M. Bowman, *Ways Youth Learn* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1952), 45.

¹² Eugene C. Roehlkepartain, *The Teaching Church: Moving Christian Education to Center Stage* (Nashville, Tennessee: Abingdon Press, 1993), 100.

their new role, and to know that at least someone cares about how they carry out the task.¹³

As part of this task, a teacher must be a person who serves. The servant leader is the Jesus model. While it is true that teachers also serve, they serve best by leading. Servant leaders are not passive but active; they are not wanting for something to happen, but causing something to happen. We all embrace the concept but fail to understand exactly what is involved. It embraces more than acts; it is an attitude that pervades all that we do. Skillful teachers have personal and spiritual maturity, mastery of their subjects, consistency of life, and certainty of what they are teaching. They often seem to have more to share than time allows. They love their students and show compassion and empathy for them. Being sensitive, they are careful not to hurt the feelings of their pupils and they always help students see how to apply truth to their lives. The teacher exists for the student. He or she teaches more than subjects; they teach individuals. If the student has not learned, the teacher has not taught. Their highest fulfillment comes in pouring their life out as a “drink-offering”¹⁴ for their students. An educator understands the concept of teacher/student.

A Christian educator will never cease to be a student. He or she must continually grow in knowledge and in teaching power. The completion of a training course will be the beginning of a program that will keep him or her fully prepared for their task. The Christian teacher who is unprepared for his task is at a tremendous disadvantage. How can a boy or girl who attends public school five days a week and gets the very best instruction

¹³ Roy Oswald with Jackie McMakin, *How to Prevent Lay Leader Burnout* (Washington, DC: Alban Institute, 1984), 31.

¹⁴ Kenneth O. Gangel and Howard G. Hendricks, *The Christian Educator's Handbook on Teaching: A Comprehensive Resource on the Distinctiveness of True Christian Teaching* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Books, 1988), 244.

from a well-trained teacher have much respect for an untrained or poorly prepared teacher under whom he or she sits for only one hour a week? The public school teacher may be a man or woman of opinion, but the Sunday school teacher must be a person of conviction. The Christian educator must know that which they teach. According to Benson, the teacher should know more than they can teach. It is not sufficient to know just enough to fill in the time. There must be earnest study and close investigation in order to have a complete grasp of the lesson. The teacher needs to be sufficiently well informed on the subject to answer any question their pupils may ask. More than that, the teacher who is a master of his or her subject can watch the effect of their efforts on the class and direct with ease the trend of their thought and participation.¹⁵

According to Smart, the teacher seems to be a sort of stained glass window and the sunshine of God's truth shining through the teacher's mind, spirit, and life takes on the glow and the color of that teacher, whether it be bright and glowing or whether it be dark and gloomy.¹⁶ Teaching techniques and knowledge of content are of little use unless those who live the truth of God use them. Eavey is correct when he says, "The teacher may teach a little by what he says; he teaches more by what he does, but most by what he is."¹⁷

Also, Smart continues, "one of the most praiseworthy achievements of the religious education movement in the early years of this century, was its focusing of attention upon the person who is to be educated. Its slogan was: "We do not teach subject matter. We teach the child," and its concern was that the whole process of education

¹⁵ Clarence H. Benson. *The Christian Teacher* (Chicago, Illinois: Moody Press, 1950), 211.

¹⁶ Findley B. Edge. *Teaching For Results* (Nashville, Tennessee: Broadman Press, 1956), 224.

¹⁷ C. B. Eavey, *Principles of Teaching for Christian Teachers* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1940), 79.

should be adapted to the observable needs of the child. This constituted a reaction against a type of teaching in which the teacher merely “got up” a lesson on a certain subject and delivered the prepared matter to the class without any careful consideration as to whether or not the subject matter was relevant. The educator must give consideration to the present experience and needs of the members of the class. As individual persons, each is at a different stage in his or her development, they were ignored and no attempt was made even to discover what their most urgent problems might be. Among kindergarten and primary children it usually meant that the children had poured out upon them a mass of Biblical stories and information, often without any thought being given to the question whether or not the material was within their range of comprehension.”¹⁸ As Christian educators who are equipped and empowered for teaching for change, our teaching has as its purpose, not limited to the sharing of large quantities of information into the minds of our students, but the lending of assistance that the student needs for their spiritual growth as Christian. Therefore, before we can rightly teach anyone, whether they are young children, youth, or adults, educators must have some knowledge, not only of human development, but also of specific stages of development at which our students now find themselves.

¹⁸ Smart, *The Teaching Ministry of the Church*, 124.

CHAPTER THREE

THEORETICAL FOUNDATION AND REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The researcher argues that Christian Education is in dialogue with all that the church does and is in its preaching, teaching, pastoral, outreach, serving, and caring ministries. It broadens and deepens understanding of the sacramental and liturgical life of the church and it embraces issues of ethics and evangelism as well as nurture and conversion. The objective of the researcher is to develop a model that will equip volunteers to be able to teach in Sunday school and enhance their skill so they can handle any age level or any topic. By developing an approach that is liberating and knowledgeable, the educator will realize that the curriculum must be Bible integrated in theory and practice. The Bible will provide more than theoretical guidance and generalization. The Bible should be the integrating factor around which all subject matter is correlated and arranged and provide the criterion by which all other subject matter is judged.

In the field of Christian education that is guided by Biblical truth, education is not limited to Biblical exposition. Christian schools seek to develop within the learner a perspective that enables the learner to understand, appreciate, and live a Christian life in the world in which God has placed them. The school's education will help the individual develop the ability to separate truth from error, not only in Bible doctrine, but also in the facts and issues of their everyday life. The Christian educator or teacher is to be a guide or

resource person in the wonderful experience of learning. Christian educators accept a significant challenge that includes self-discovery, personal learning and growth, teaching others, meeting the needs of others, excitement, and satisfaction. Each educator brings what he or she has to offer to the teaching/learning experience and joins hands with God and others to provide quality Christian education.

Biblical Foundations

Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates. Deuteronomy 6:4-9 (NIV)

The Christian religion is founded on one who was called the Master (or Teacher), which certainly involves teaching. Deuteronomy, chapter 6, written hundreds of years before Christ, says that worship of the Lord God is meaningful and must be taught in the home. When you have a serious belief in God, then you are bound to teach, starting in your own home. This project sets out to emphasize the importance of Christian education, and the teaching of adults, and the responsibility of adults passing on education to the children, which includes teaching every age level in the church. This is the most important aspect of the teaching work of the church. Christian education is important because it is an inescapable part of the work of the church because our Lord commanded it, because people need it, and because the church cannot live unless it teaches. One additional reason why Christian education is of enormous importance is that our kind of world is in

desperate need of Christian teaching.¹ The educational process that each of us come through in life shapes what we believe, what we value, and what we are able to accomplish.

The remaining decades of this century are pivotal for education. We have failed to provide teachers and leaders in the church with an understanding of the basic rudiments of biblical knowledge and Christian theology before they teach. Instead, we have consistently “put the cart before the horse”² by thrusting them into service without any preparation at all. Asking people to teach before giving them adequate training has resulted in such a weak transmittal of the faith that many of those who have been teaching Sunday school for years are still not sure who or what they are teaching.

What is the educational challenge for the church as it seeks to equip productive believers in this decade? There are basic educational challenges to consider: First, the biblical understanding of our Christian faith and really knowing what we believe. The second challenge is the experiential development of life as a Christian, which means Christian living as an everyday experience. We are challenged to live in a way that society will know that our life is a representative of the one we serve and witness to, which is Jesus Christ. The third challenge is the decreasing moral development of our children and how we prepare our children for living in an increasingly immoral culture. Our children face so many societal problems and have so many influences that it is difficult for them not to be touched by this increasingly immoral way of living. As Christian educators and parents, we must teach in a way that our children will understand the principles to use in

¹ Harry G. and Betty L. Goodykoontz, *Training to Teach: A Basic Course in Christian Education* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1953), 13.

² Sara Covin Juengst, *Equipping the Saints: Teacher Training in the Church* (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 1998), 3.

living a life that is pleasing to God. It is the responsibility of the church to equip our Christian educators through training and, in return, our educators will empower and equip the adults and children. Fourth, if Christian educators are trained, then they will impact the faith community in a meaningful way. The task of the Christian educator is to make an impact on Christians so they can make an impact on society by touching people for Christ.

A focal point in the outworking of each of these is a meaningful teaching ministry. Take the growth of the Christian family as an example. We are talking about the educational involvement of providing a biblical understanding of marriage and family, of training for effective sharing of parental faith and standards with children, meaningful family worship, family communication and recreation, and parent-teen relationships.

These are the critical concerns of educational efforts as they impinge on today's Christian family. From them comes the use of such educational means as the seminar, the young couples' Bible class, the resource center of quality audiovisual and reading materials, and the encouragement of informal sharing-learning experiences. The program indicated is more than a routine Sunday school class. When considering ministry, a reflection on biblical education must be done to have a foundational understanding of education beginning with Judaism and moving to Christianity.

Biblical education provides authoritative principles on which to build. Secure in its Biblical grounding, Biblical education cannot be boxed into inflexible forms and is free to use contemporary means for ministry. The roots of Christian education run deep into the soil of Judaism. It should not seem strange that the church claims a Judaic heritage. The New Testament Church was founded by Jews and was written by Jews with the exception of Luke. The Bible of the early church was the Hebrew Scripture of the Old Testament.

To the Hebrew, God was manifested both in history and in the law. Profoundly convinced of God's leading through His covenant relationship with Israel, the Hebrew faithfully taught the young so "that they should put their confidence in God and not forget the works of God, but keep His commandment" (Psalm 78:7, NIV). To the Hebrew, the concept that God was teacher emerged from the nature of God as creator and sustainer. His will and wisdom were to be sought and cherished. Thus, priest, prophet, and king were all viewed as interpreters in one way or another of the Lord in history and in revelation.

One passage has become imbedded in Hebrew consciousness more deeply than any other. The instruction of the *Shema*³ contained in Deuteronomy 6:4-9 sets the agenda for the home and the nation. So great was instruction in the eyes of God's chosen people that they equated it with life. "Take hold of instruction; do not let go. Guard her; for she is your life," (Proverbs 4:13).

Parents' teaching served as the foundation of faith for the children. Children learned through participation in informal, everyday activities and special events, such as feasts and fasts; parental control of children's conduct; and the passing down of oral tradition.

Learning was informal. For example, a mother would teach her children about the Sabbath meal as she performed her household duties (i.e. preparing the Sabbath meal, lighting the Sabbath lamp, and performing the Sabbath rites). The father also played a role in the educational process. He taught his children scripture recitation and memorization, and the commands of the *Shema*. The *Shema* calls for religious training and education to

³ "Historical Roles of Christian Education," *Spiritual Formation Review and Expositor*, 98 (Summer 2001).

be a natural and integral part of everyday family life. This sense of integration or intimacy is at the heart of the Hebrew word *yada*,⁴ “to know.” The general instructions given in the *Shema* and specific ones given in the Mosaic Law clearly are driven by this educational purpose and from this estimation of what is meant by “knowing.” The children were taught about the repulsive nature of sin and the virtues of honesty, industry, sobriety, and obedience. When the son reached the age of personal accountability as defined by the law (bar mitzvah), the father publicly thanked God that he was no longer responsible for his son’s actions.

Through the bitter years of exile, Judaism survived because of an ingrained respect for education. What the Tabernacle in the wilderness and the Temple in Jerusalem were to the devout, the synagogue became to the Jew in exile. The principal purpose of the synagogue was teaching. Barclay writes, “it is necessary clearly to remember that the Synagogue was very much more a place of teaching than the modern Church. The object of the Synagogue Sabbath services was not public worship in the narrower sense of the term; it was not devotion; it was religious instruction.”⁵ It was the center where the law was explained, expounded, and applied.

The Hebrew word *hanak*,⁶ “to educate” or “to train,” comes from a root word meaning to dedicate or consecrate. This verb is used in Proverbs 22:6: “Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it.”⁷ The education of a

⁴ Ibid., 3.

⁵ William Barclay, *Educational Ideals of the Ancient World* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1974), 24.

⁶ Werner C. Graendorf, *Introduction to Biblical Christian Education* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1981), 27.

⁷ New International Version.

child from the Hebrew perspective was viewed as an act of consecration. More than worship, however, is prompted by *hanak*.

Moses' teaching is directed to the believing community in which persons are called to relate their faith in God to all of life. This passage from Deuteronomy provides insights about the goals, the teacher, the student, the content, and the setting of biblical education. The educational mandate of Deuteronomy 6:4-9 requires passing on the commandments of God to the next generation. Its ultimate goal is to foster a love of God expressed in loyalty and unqualified obedience. To love God is to answer to a unique claim, to be obedient, to keep God's commandments, to heed them and to hear God's voice, and to serve God.

The love of God is expressed in obedience to God's commandments and in giving oneself wholly (heart, soul, and strength). Teaching is to be incisive in challenging hearers to a total life response to God characterized by heartfelt devotion. This teaching is the particular responsibility of parents, yet this goal has significance for all forms of education.

In the ultimate sense, God is the teacher in biblical education. God is the author and discloser of all truth, and both teacher and students stand under this truth. God calls teachers and students to understand, grow in, and obey God's revealed Word. In this passage and throughout the biblical record, teachers are responsible as stewards and proclaimers of God's truth. This truth can be communicated in a variety of ways, always involving a relational dimension. A relationship of love, trust, openness, honest, acceptance, caring, support, forgiveness, correction, and affirmation is to characterize interactions between teacher and student. The teacher is like the parent and is called upon to model the love of God that he or she hopes to encourage students to follow.

Through the teaching and example of the teacher, the student is called to understanding, growth, and obedience in relation to God's revealed Word. While the teacher is encouraged to diligently and incisively teach, it is assumed that the student will be open and willing to receive this instruction. Teachers in the context of Jewish life were primarily parents and Deuteronomy 6 therefore focuses on this role.

The essential context of biblical education according to Deuteronomy 6 is the commandments, decrees, and laws of God, which Moses was directed to teach, but this content is also vitally related to the whole of life. The content of God's revelation is to be taught or impressed upon students, to be talked about at various times, to be tied and bound upon one's body, and to be written in public and readily observed locations. Truth is to be integrated into all of life and is to effect the moment-to-moment and day-to-day existence of the people of God. This content is both foundational and radical. It is foundational in providing the basic truth and structure upon which all else must be built. It is radical in providing the roots from which all life is nourished or affected. Thus, both stability and growth are assured to the extent to which the content of education is based on God's revelation.

The setting for teaching described in this passage includes all those situations in which parents can impress upon their children the commandments of God. There are various occasions when this is to be done, when sitting at home, when walking along the road, when lying down, and when getting up. God's commandments are to be present even as symbols upon people's hand and foreheads, and the doorframes of houses and gates. The whole of life provides situations in which persons can be discipled and nurtured in the ways of God.

New Testament Foundations

(18) And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. (19) Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and of the Holy Spirit, (20) and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” Matthew 28:19-20 (NIV)

In the New Testament, the Old Testament patterns of education persist, but the followers of Jesus are provided with a new agenda for their educational efforts. This agenda is most explicit in Matthew 28:18-20.

The purpose of the disciples’ ministry is to enable others to become obedient disciples of Jesus Christ. The purpose of making disciples is totally dependent upon sharing the content of Jesus’ own teachings, those truths revealed by God with direct implications for life. The challenge posed for current effort in Christian education is this: Are obedient disciples of Jesus Christ being nurtured and taught all that Jesus taught? If so, there is a basis for affirmation and continued reliance upon God’s gracious undertaking. If not, there is a challenge for careful evaluation and renewed efforts. In addition to this educational commission, the whole pattern of instruction of Matthew’s Gospel shows how teaching was conducted in the early church. Matthew’s Gospel is a teaching manual for discipling Christians.

The New Testament model for Christian teaching centers on the shared Christian vision, mission, and memory, as the followers of Jesus Christ seek to be faithful to God’s calling in the world. A passage for a discussion of education and of methods in particular is Luke 24:13-35, in which Jesus talks with two disciples on the road to Emmaus. Key components of this teaching episode are discussion (v.14), open inquiry (v. 17), correction and clarification (vv. 25-27), role modeling (vv. 30-31), and the need for response (vv. 33-

35). Whereas this educational encounter includes the dimension of declaration as evidenced in Jesus' exposition of the Scriptures, it also includes the dimension of dialogue that enables the disciples to be engaged not only at the level of their minds, but also includes their affections, wills, and actions. Here is an educational encounter that calls for the head, heart, and hand response to the good news declared by Jesus. The nature of education permits direct interaction and the healthy stimulus of group dynamics. Effective teaching encourages student participation and the sharing of knowledge and experience.

Jesus' approach in interacting with these disciples includes three noteworthy elements. First, Jesus asks them questions (vv. 17-19). The Master Teacher knows the answers to these questions, yet he wants his students to think for themselves. Second, Jesus listens. He hears their response to the questions he asks. Teachers often fail to listen to students and to allow adequate time for thought. Third, it is only after questioning and listening that Jesus both exhorts these disciples and opens the Scriptures, explaining their meaning. Jesus explains the truths discussed by Moses and the prophets through his interpretation of the texts. In response to Jesus' teaching, these disciples describe their encounter as one in which both their eyes and the Scriptures were opened. The word for "open" here is the same word used to describe how a womb is opened at the birth of a child. There is a sense of joy and the burning of the heart that parallels a birth experience in terms of its personal impact.

Historical Foundations

Education depends upon what Bernard Bailyn calls “the great axles of society, family, church, community, and the economy.”⁸ As those fundamental social institutions shift over the generations, the forms of education also shift.

The volunteer teaching movement began in England as the Sunday school movement in 1780 and continues today under a variety of names, including the Sunday church school, the church school, and so forth. In 1785, Sunday school began in America. The beginnings of Sunday school were in England under the care of Robert Raikes, a journalist from Gloucester. In 1780, he started the first Sunday school for the poor children of the city who were not in regular school attendance because of working in the factories. John Wesley helped form the schools at his preaching locations and William Fox organized the schools into societies. These early Sunday schools taught reading, writing, arithmetic, Bible study/catechism, and had a chapel time. Back in America, the independence that was gained after the Revolution brought about change within the church in addition to the changes in the government.

The Sunday schools in the United States took on a unique quality of their own. The schools were voluntary and even spread throughout different denominations. The development of curriculum and the organization of these schools helped provide Christian instruction that included systematic study of the Bible and important helps for teachers to adapt the lessons to various age groups. For many years, the church and especially the

⁸ Bernard Bailyn, *Education in the Forming of American Society* (New York: Vintage Books, 1960), 45.

Sunday school provided a central focus of Christian education for families and communities.

Even though the Sunday school originated over two hundred years ago, most church leaders believe that an organized program of Christian teaching still has a significant place in the life of local congregations. Whatever form the program may take in the years that lie ahead, an effective teacher will be the most significant person in the teaching ministry.

Teaching is ministry. Teachers are partners with God in the nurture and growth of the people of God. For many decades, the church has depended on volunteer teachers to communicate its history and its message. This is a great calling. Christian educators, more than any other leader, can impact the church school. Each person who teaches has a faith, a story, and a heritage to share. God never intended for anyone to keep this story to himself or herself because He wanted the story shared with others. The strength of the Christian movement is telling God's story, the Good News of Jesus Christ, the gospel as it is lived out in the lives of individual Christians.

Jesus' closing statement to his disciples commissioned them to go out and teach, to tell others about all that he had told them. His whole life had been an example of teaching. Jesus knew that he must involve his students in the lessons. He asked questions that made them think for the answers. He listened to his students and got to know them and their ideas, using everyday situations that they understood. The Gospels are full of examples of Jesus' storytelling, most of which use action words. Jesus taught with authority, using Scriptures and asking for commitment.

In Romans 12:3-8 and 1Corinthians 12:4-6, 27-28a, Paul writes that each of us has specific gifts given to us by God. In Ephesians 4:11-13, he tells us that we are to use those

gifts in order to prepare God's people. These words challenge us to teach in such a manner that we get an active, involved response from our teaching. We cannot expect an interested response unless we involve the students in their own learning.

Theological Foundations

Christian education is coming of age as a theological discipline and method. It is asserting a new autonomy as a theory of learning the Christian faith. It is drawing upon the learning process as well as on the Christian revelation as a source of a relevant theology and it is expressing itself through the dynamic Christian life of the local parish.

Christian educators are called upon to raise the consciousness of persons on issues that relate to righteousness, justice, and freedom as components of God's continuing activity in the world. The need for structure, discipline, forgiveness, and reconciliation applies to educational interactions in which persons confront one another. The place of evangelism in Christian education is to be recognized; the outworking of God's redemptive work in all human endeavors must be explored. Christian education must strive to be Christ centric, enabling persons to know the living Word, and to mature in him. Christian educators are called upon to help persons grapple with the implications of Christ's lordship personally and corporately. The reality of a new creation in Christ provides hope for educators and students alike in their joint efforts. Christian teachers, parents, administrators, and students must be sensitive to the work of the Spirit in motivating persons and must pray for the Spirit's effectual working in their lives. The human quest for truth in education must be seen in relation to God being the source of all truth. Christian educators must be sensitive to the workings of the Holy Spirit in the areas of renewal and transformation. Christians are in need of reconciliation and healing in their

relationships with God and with others. The ministry of reconciliation must be operative in all levels of personal and interpersonal interactions in Christian education. Christian educators are challenged to correct an overemphasis on the body/soul dualism and theory/practical dichotomies that confront educational efforts and work for integration.

CHAPTER FOUR

METHODOLOGY: A CHANGE HAS COME OVER ME

This researcher was challenged to design and implement a training model that would equip, empower, and challenge educators to embrace methods, techniques, and strategies that would help them become effective teachers in the church and the community as they become prepared to handle the weekly influx of members now attending the church. Teaching for change embraces transformation. In this society, the church and its leaders must become prepared, equipped, and empowered to address reading illiteracy among our young, behavioral problems in the classroom, various learning styles, and helping these students grow spiritually. All ten participants stated that the training has helped them in preparation, classroom management, confidence in their teaching, and preparation by using a lesson plan that keeps them focused. According to authors McNiff, Lomax, and Whitehead, “when you speak about your educative influence, you are referring to the extent to which you have influenced people so that they will realize more fully the potentials of their own learning. This implies that you need to evaluate whether or not you have helped people to grow, mentally, physically and spiritually, and to appreciate how they come to grow.”¹

¹ Jean McNiff, Pamela Lomax, and Jack Whitehead, *You and Your Action Research Project*, 2nd ed (New York: RoutledgeFalmer, 2003), 179.

The researcher chose an action research method and qualitative analysis in her ministry context because it gave her more flexible employment of different knowledge claims, strategies of inquiry, methods of data collection, and analysis. This methodology allowed the researcher the ability to change the questions and refine them as the researcher learned what to ask and whom to ask. The researcher adopted and used one or more strategies of inquiry and had a broader method of data collection, which included observations, interviews, emails, and other image data.

The researcher has had a relationship with each of the participants in this context for past three years. All of the participants, except three, were members of this context and were involved in the teaching ministry when the researcher united with this context. All of the participants are 36-65 years old, except one participant who is in the age range of 15-25. Nine of participants have some college education or graduated from college and one participant graduated from high school. Nine of the participants' years of teaching experience were church related, ranging from 0-5 years, and one ranged 6-10 years. None of the ten participants had teacher training before they started teaching in this context.

After meeting with the pastor, context associates, and Christian education ministry team, a biblical model was developed. The model included eight teaching sessions to be led by the researcher. All participants received a pre-test survey and consent form prior to the initial training night, which was to be completed and returned at the first session. All forms were completed and returned to the researcher. Using resources from authors McNiff, Lomax, and Whitehead molded this phase of training.

In developing this biblical model for training Christian educators, the researcher primarily used three textbooks as a point of reference, *The Christian Educator's Handbook on Teaching* by Kenneth O. Gangel and Howard G. Hendricks, *The Seven*

Laws Of Teaching by John Milton Gregory, and *Jesus the Master Teacher* by H. H. Horne.

All of the surveys that were developed contained both open-ended and closed-ended questions. There was space for comments from the participants on each survey. Surveys were done by a coding system without any participant's name. The surveys were pre-coded before they were distributed. The pre-training surveys were completed before the first session began. The researcher believed that this would give the participants the freedom to address their concerns without bias.

The post-training survey was developed to measure whether the participants were open for change, to give methods, strategies, and techniques to help the participants prepare for the teaching experience, and to share resources that are available to help the educator teach for change. In all aspects of the training, the participants were receptive, open, motivated, and challenged to become the best they can become. They are asking for more training to be given as soon as possible.

At the close of the training session, a large group discussion was held for the purpose of getting feedback from each participant. One of the concerns from Participant R was, "how do you get the young men involved into the teaching hour? They seem so distant." The researcher took one of Jesus' teaching methods and elaborated on it to meet the participants' needs and concerns. The first method the researcher elaborated on was problem solving where Jesus sought to move people to understand and apply his words to their personal lives. Second method was questions and answers. This was where Jesus asked questions that provoked people to think and seek the truth. He answered questions to move people from where they were to where they needed to go.

The most intense feedback from the participants involved the need for more training and one-on-one training and evaluation. The participants felt that the overall growth of the Christian Education ministry cannot happen until all of the Christian educators and the Christian education leaders are trained. The participants' desire is that the researcher will continue in a monthly training session for all educators. The researcher met with the pastor representatives, which was the Christian Education Ministry team and context associates, to discuss some of the feedback from the participants for further consideration.

One of the questions from the Post-Training Survey was "Do you feel that the church will benefit from Christian educators receiving training?" All participants checked "yes."

1. We need to get out of the box and teach for change.
2. This training have prepared Participant M to be a better teacher and better prepared for Sunday.
3. Christian educators mindset will have to change in order to reach people and bring them to Christ.
4. Participant D said that Wesley would grow more and more with teachers who are equipped, ready, and willing to do what "thus saith the Lord."
5. The only way the church will benefit is if all the educators have the training.
6. It helps the teacher to focus on the students and prepare students for the future.

All of the participants stated that their needs were met and addressed. They were excited and motivated about getting back into the classroom with new methods and strategies designed for teaching and reaching the children, youth, and adults.

In individual interviews, the participants said that now they felt that this researcher had prepared, equipped, and empowered them to be an effective teacher in the classroom. Three of the participants wanted the researcher to become their mentor.

Hypothesis

Training is an important component of the Christian education enterprise. The primary goal of all teaching in the church school context is transformation. All teachers must understand the connection between classroom performance and transformation in the life of the learner. Every aspect of the classroom teaching presentation should be aimed at transforming the life of the learners and helping them to become effective disciples. The desired end is that learners will grow in faith toward effective discipleship.

If Christian educators at Wesley Chapel United Methodist Church would participate in teachers' training, their teaching skills will be strengthened. The educator will become clearer and more precise in classroom delivery, which will ultimately have an impact on church growth and the members' spiritual formation. Some of the new members have no church background and others are moving from another denomination, angry about the biases in that church, and they have many questions on denominational history, polity, worship, church structure, societal issues, and general spiritual growth.

Intervention

This researcher used an action research model that has an underpinning that is biblical with Jesus as the Master Teacher. The Christian educator will have a far better chance of achieving results in increased Bible knowledge or in the area of Christian living if he/she knows exactly what results he/she wants before the quarter begins and if he/she

teaches each lesson during the quarter consciously trying to achieve these specific objectives. This is superior to teaching the lessons as they came, wholly unrelated to each other or to any central objective and merely “hoping” that some good would come from the teaching.

Jesus knew that merely to expose people to his great truths would not necessarily mean that they would learn them or experience them. He recognized that the pupil’s interests and needs must determine what is taught and how it is taught. Recognizing this supremely important educational principle, Jesus, on one occasion, said, “I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now” (John 16:12).²

In order to be effective teachers, we must learn from the Master Teacher, Jesus. He used several different methods of teaching people that were extremely effective. His methods can still be employed today. Jesus knew that exposure to this knowledge was not enough, so Jesus had to teach the people in light of and in terms of their background, their needs, or their interests. His “curriculum” that he taught was conditioned by his learners.

During the eight sessions there will be a curriculum that will be taught on the following areas:

- Session 1: Understanding the Teacher’s Call
 Basic Knowledge of the Bible
- Session 2: Learning Styles
 Classroom Management
- Session 3: Creating a Lesson Plan
 Implementation of a Lesson Plan
- Session 4: The Seven Laws of Teaching by John Milton Gregory

² Findley B. Edge, *Teaching For Results* (Nashville, Tennessee: Broadman Press, 1956), 78.

- Session 5: Understanding the Teaching-Learning Process
 Steps in the Teaching-Learning Process
 Principles of Learning
- Session 6: Dynamics in the Teaching Situation
 Method for Asking Questions
- Session 7: Ten Curriculum Decisions Teachers Must Make
- Session 8: The Principles of Jesus' Teaching
 Closing/Evaluation

Research Design

The target group for this project will be Christian educators who are members of Wesley Chapel United Methodist Church. These educators teach in one of the Christian education ministries such as Sunday school, Vacation Bible, Bible study, and New Member classes. The Christian educators are members of Wesley Chapel United Methodist Church and are laity. They had to commit to eight hours of training, which was given in 55-minute sessions for a total of eight sessions. At the end of each night session, a large group discussion was held to get feedback. The training was given over three nights and one Saturday morning, which was the recommendation of the core group. After meeting with my Context associates, Christian education ministry team, and the pastor, this was approved for the training time, which was from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. nightly and Saturday morning from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.

The training process began with biblical and theological reflection. The participants dealt with practical steps that must be taken in order to be effective in a teaching ministry. The results from training are an increase in attendance and educators who are coming to the teaching moment more prepared with a plethora of teaching methods.

Measurement

The researcher developed several instruments that were used to gather data from the participants. First, pre-training survey and needs assessment forms were given to the participants prior to the training to assess if the training needed to be modified. The researcher used an instrument called checking myself as a middle-way assessment tool. This instrument gave each participant the opportunity to assess and evaluate their involvement in spiritual preparation before entering the classroom to teach. Second, a post training survey and post training evaluation form were completed. Finally, the researcher had interviews with each participant and each session was closed with a large group discussion to evaluate whether the teacher's needs were being addressed. A modified assessment instrument was given at the time of evaluation and closing. The researcher listened to the participants and, as a result, created and implemented a simple lesson plan. Data analysis was done with the various instruments.

Instrumentation

The researcher developed a Consent form, Pre-training and Post training surveys, Participants' survey (modified after training begin), Needs assessment, and "Checking Myself as a Teacher." There are many training methods available to help Christian educators become effective teachers. Instruments were developed and tested using an action research model. This researcher used a qualitative research analysis technique for evaluation of the data. The researcher's training model consisted of eight training sessions on how to become effective teachers through the use of a biblical model as Jesus being the Master Teacher. Before disseminating the survey to the participants for completion, the

researcher explained in detail the purpose and the plan of the survey. Next, an explanation was given why the researcher had prepared an Agreement for project implementation. This gave participants a level of confidence in knowing that their shared information was secure. Then, the participants were given a Pre-Survey and Needs Assessment Survey and a post-training survey to evaluate the effectiveness of the training model. The core group who participated in the training consisted of Christian educators who are currently teaching in one of the age level ministries or have taught at Wesley Chapel. Each session began with a Scriptural reference and prayer and the training was fifty-five minute sessions with a five-minute break between sessions.

The project was implemented over a four-night period for a total of eight-hours. The core groups consisted of ten Christian educators. At the close of each training night, there was a time for large group discussion. After the close of training session, individual interviews were done.

CHAPTER FIVE

FIELD EXPERIENCE: IMPLEMENTING A BIBLICAL MODEL THAT WILL GENERATE CHANGE

The church stands under the mandate of the New Testament to teach the Scriptures to its constituents. Therefore, the church's obligations differ substantially from informal Bible teaching settings. The church must continually strive to meet its biblical objectives. Whereas a home Bible study usually organizes itself around the felt needs of the group, the church must plan its teaching differently. Needs expressed by the congregation and those perceived by church leadership must blend together to form a stable and systematic curriculum.

—Michael S. Lawson

The key to effective teaching in the church unquestionably lies with the teacher.

The curriculum and class-hour management all depend on the wise implementation of a caring teacher. No educational program can rise above the teachers' commitment level to excellence in teaching. The following approaches to teaching all ages will assist a Christian educator in effective teaching as shown in Figure 2.

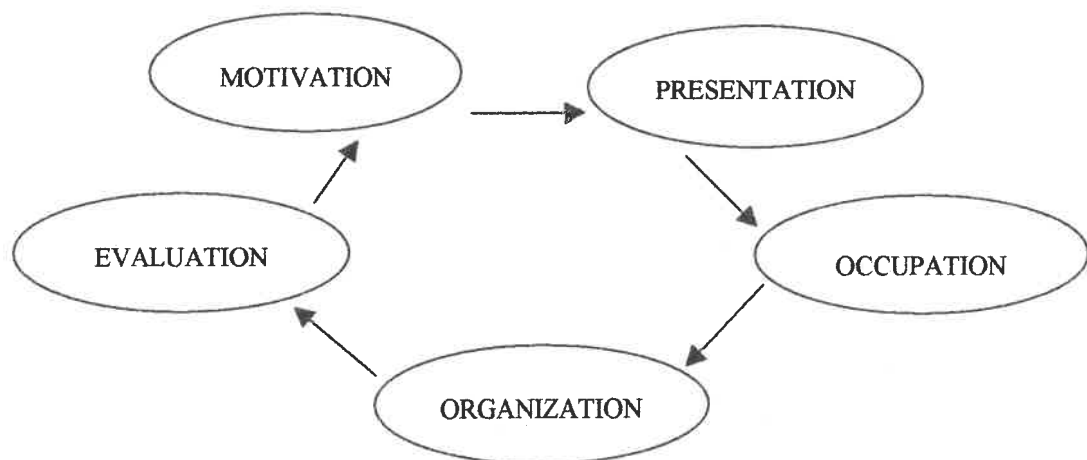


Fig. 2. Approaches To Teaching

The first approach is motivation. The educator must appeal to the interior instincts or impulses of the student, that is, impel him/her to positive action. The second approach is presentation. The educator must present materials in a way that is understandable and interesting so that the student will feel a need to remain motivated. The third approach is occupation. The educator must occupy or enlist the student in what is going on in order to permit him/her to become a part of the lesson. The fourth approach is organization. The educator must make the atmosphere conducive to learning. The appearance of work areas and the materials used is as important to the teaching-learning experience as is the educator himself/herself. The final approach is evaluation. The educator must give the student an opportunity to put into practice what he/she has set out to teach, then correct and teach again, if time permits.

Some well thought-out management strategies at the beginning of a teacher's ministry can help the educator to move to higher expectations. During the implementation of this project, this researcher tried to introduce the Christian educators to some new expectations. With this in mind, the researcher started the implementation process.

The pre-test survey was given to all participants. At the pre-interviews, the Christian educators were excited about starting the training and, before the first session, the researcher talked with all participants. The researcher explained the four-day process, providing a complete overview of the purpose of the surveys, why there is a need for the data, and why the consent for permission of participation was suggested. Then, the researcher gave out the consent for participation. Pre-test surveys and consents were completed and returned. In addition, participants were informed that their names would not appear in the dissertation or any of the researcher's writing.

Once again, the researcher met with the pastor and Christian Education ministry leaders and gave them an update of the progress and gave them an agenda for the training for final approval. Final approval was given and the training process started. Questions used in the surveys were open and closed-ended.

Participant Selection and Pre-Test Results

There were ten Christian educators selected to participate in the pre-test survey and training. The participants consisted of educators who are currently teaching in Sunday school and Bible study or who have taught in Sunday school and Bible study within the past year. The participants taught classes for different age groups. There was one participant who taught Nursery, infancy to five years old. There were six participants who taught Youth ages six years old to eighteen years old. Finally, there were three participants who taught ages nineteen years old and older.

The researcher will provide information that is significant to the study in this project. The responses will follow each pre-test survey question or statement for which they were given.

1) The number of pre-test survey participants by gender was-

Male (3)

Female (7)

2) Education background were-

Some college (4)

College graduate (5)

High school (1)

3) Age level were-

15-25 (1)

36-45 (3)

46-55 (4)

56-65 (2)

4) Years of Teaching Experience (Church related)-

0-5 (9)

6-10 (1)

After collecting the surveys and examining them, the data revealed that all of the educators had attended college or graduate school, but none had attended any Bible schools or seminary. The data revealed that advanced study had not been done by any of the participants. Also, the data revealed that the participants had not received any theological preparation before teaching. The only experience the participants had with theological training was Bible study.

5) Participant only teaching experience- Wesley Chapel (8)

Other denominations- Church God in Church (1)
Baptist (1)

6) Attended Teacher's Training before teaching at Wesley Chapel-
(0)

Data analysis revealed that none of the participants who are currently teaching or had taught in the teaching ministry had received training before they entered the classroom. During large group discussion, all of the participants agreed that their teaching would have been more effective if they had received training.

7) Believed there is a calling on their life in the teaching ministry-

Yes (4) No (6)

When the researcher initially started to select the participants for the training, she was unaware of the teaching background of the Christian educators. The researcher believed that the participants understood what it meant to be called into the teaching ministry, but discovered that most of the participants did not know what it really means to be called. After the surveys were completed and returned, the data showed that four out of ten participants believed that they were called into the teaching ministry. The other six participants believed that they were recruited and/or stumbled into teaching.

Were recruited-

Yes (6)

Volunteered-

Yes (4)

8) What is your understanding about your role of being a Christian educator?

Participant A: Is to bring more youth to Christ and show them the importance of living with Jesus and God eternally.

Participant D: To help show love and compassion.

Participant M: I understand God and the importance of having Him in the youth lives and what it is like to sellout for God.

Participant W: To help each student learn God's word and to apply it.

Participant J: Being a caring person, reaching out to others, and helping them learn more about Jesus.

Participant R: Promote change.

Participant T: To get close to God, so He may lead His people and me.

Participant L: Is to make disciples for Jesus.

Participants that did not respond-

(2)

In the final interview with these two participants, they said that Christian education was a vehicle that is used to help teach.

As part of the pre-test survey and interview process, the researcher asked each participant to fill out a form called: Checking Myself as a Teacher. The objective of this survey was to help educators feel comfortable evaluating themselves and recognize evaluation as an aid to better teaching. If our teachers are to improve, they must have a plan for self-improvement. Improvement comes not by accident, but by conscious effort. The plan must be carefully worked out, consciously entered into, and systematically

followed. Each participant completed and returned the survey. A rubric scale of excellent, very good, good, fair, and poor were used. The results are as follows:

9) Regular in Attendance to Sunday school:

Excellent (5) Very Good (4) Good (1)

Out of the ten participants, only five were in regular attendance in Bible study.

Final interviews discovered that 8 out of 10 participants missed 3 Sundays from teaching Sunday school within the year. Two (2) participants missed 1 time within the year.

10) On Time:

Excellent (2) Very Good (2) Good (4) Fair (0) Poor (2)

11) Begin Preparation of Lesson the First of the Week:

Excellent (1) Very Good (1) Good (3) Fair (0) Poor (5)

12) Pupil Information Notebook:

Excellent (0) Very Good (1) Good (2) Fair (2) Poor (5)

13) Follow a Systematic Plan of Bible Study:

Excellent (1) Very Good (2) Good (3) Fair (3) Poor (0)
No response (1)

14) Daily Devotions:

Excellent (2) Very Good (1) Good (6) Fair (1) Poor (0)

15) Definite Plan for Improving My Teaching:

Excellent (2) Very Good (3) Good (5) Fair (0) Poor (0)

Teachers shape people's thinking, attitudes, and behavior during the most formative periods of their lives. Leaders are often formed in the process of exposure to one or more significant educator; most of them serve in classrooms. Teachers should cease

from being performers and become learners. They should be people who can do things better, but they should also be people who can equip others to do it better. Henry Adams confirmed the need for learning, "What one knows is, in youth, of little moment; they know enough who know how to learn." What this means in simple terms is "Give me a fish and I eat for a day; teach me to fish and I eat for life."

Christian educators need to understand the importance of becoming leaders within the faith community. The data gathered by the researcher supports this idea and restates that Christian educators are leaders. First, we must define the term leader. Charles Kettering defines a leader "as a person who knows where he is going and is able to persuade others to go along with him or her." That is, he/she has clear-cut objectives and he/she is a motivator. He/she is not only enamored of ideas, but tasks, as well as being person-oriented.

CHAPTER SIX

REFLECTION, SUMMARY, AND CONCLUSION: WHAT'S THE NEXT STEP?

Implementing this project resulted in many unanswered questions for the participants as well as the researcher. First, the researcher had many biases about Christian educators before starting this project. The researcher believed that training was going to be basic and easy. The belief for the researcher was that the majority of the educators had been trained and equipped prior to this training. The data, which was gathered from the surveys, indicated that the participants had minimal amount of training.

In the context of Wesley Chapel United Methodist Church of McDonough, Georgia the researcher came to realize that transformation or teaching for change must start with the pastor and flow down to the Christian education ministry. One of the transforming statements from the participants was, "change and transformation can happen, but all leaders and teachers/educators must receive training." The structural makeup of the context is the pastor, a Christian education coordinator, a Bible study coordinator, and then the educators. After interviewing the Christian education ministry team, none of this team had any advanced training in Christian education. Unfortunately, this is the way the ministry has operated for many years.

Analysis of the demographic data shows that the church is located in one of the fastest growing areas of Henry County. The overall face-lift of the community has changed to upper to middle-class families with and without children who are looking for

churches that have a strong teaching ministry or basically a one-stop faith community. This means that everything their family needs can be found at that particular local church. So, this kind of thinking is now challenging the local church to become prepared, equipped, and empowered to handle the spiritual needs of the congregants and the community. For the researcher, one of the challenges was to develop a model that would cover the basic needs of the church and the educators. This was a difficult task because of the time constraints. One recommendation from the Christian educators as well as the researcher is to have a training session for all Christian education ministry leaders and Christian educators. Second, before any person begins his/her teaching ministry at this context, they must go through a training class for at least half a quarter. The reason for this recommendation is because the data analysis revealed that out of the ten participants involved in the project, not one had any previous training. Through interviews and large group discussions, the educators felt that it is essential for a person to be equipped with methods, techniques, and strategies, which will help with classroom management, overall teacher preparation, and clear and precise lesson delivery. One of the questions asked by the educators was “Do you know your mission statement or vision statement?” None of the participants knew if there was one in place.

Future training is recommended. The training should focus on a deeper understanding of the biblical teacher’s call, lesson planning (creating and implementing), learning styles, and how to ask questions for discussion. Also, there should be some time allotted for training teachers in how to address sensitive issues that surface during the teaching experience. For example, abuse, illiteracy issues, peer pressure, aging, death and illness, financial concerns, and social injustices.

Overall, the training was a great success and, because of what the educators learned during the training, they have already started to put those methods into action. One of the areas that was very exciting for the participants was lesson planning and implementation. Feedback from four of the participants stated that they are more focused, class is more organized, students are more receptive to the teaching, and class attendance has increased.

The researcher had challenges, which had to be overcome before the project could be implemented. One of the greatest challenges was selling to the Senior Pastor the idea of implementing a Christian education project that would equip and empower teachers to become effective in their roles. First, the pastor decided that there was not a need for this kind of project for the local church. He believed that all of the teachers were trained and were doing an excellent job as teachers. Also, he feared that the implementation of a project in Christian education would cause some of the teachers to think outside of the box, but he wanted a project that would address the rapid growth of the community and especially the rapid growth around the church. His current vision was that if ten percent of congregants attended Bible study and Sunday school, for him that equaled success. After many hours of meetings and telephone calls, the pastor finally gave permission for the researcher to implement the project. This process allowed the researcher to understand the difficult times associate ministers encounter working under the leadership of some pastors.

APPENDIX A
PRE-SURVEY

PRELIMINARY SURVEY AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT FORM

In an effort to make our Christian Education Ministry one of the best, your help is needed by completing this survey. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Gender: ☐ Male ☐ Female

Age: ☐ 15-25 ☐ 26-35 ☐ 36-45 ☐ 46-55 ☐ 56-65
 ☐ 66-75

Education: ☐ Middle School ☐ High School ☐ Some College
 ☐ College Graduate ☐ 5 year +

Years of Teaching Experience (Church Related):

☐ 0-5 ☐ 6-10 ☐ 11-20 ☐ 21-30 ☐ 31+

Where? _____

Other Years of Teaching Experience:

How many? _____

Where? _____

Type of teaching experience: _____

Number of years at Wesley Chapel:

☐ 0-5 ☐ 6-10 ☐ 11-20 ☐ 21-30 ☐ 31+

Have you attended a Teacher's Training Session before?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, when? _____ Where? _____

Did you attend a Teacher's Training Session before you started teaching at Wesley Chapel?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Pre-Training Survey Form

1. What year did you begin teaching? _____

2. Did you feel led into teaching? Yes ____ No ____

If yes, explain: _____

3. Were you recruited? Yes ____ No ____

4. Did you volunteer? Yes ____ No ____

5. Was it part of another role or responsibility? Yes ____ No ____

If yes, what role _____

6. How do you feel about being a teacher? _____

7. What do you understand is your task as a teacher? _____

Read each statement; then circle the number that best describes your situation
1= Not at all, 2= Somewhat, 3= Mostly, 4= Definitely

- | | |
|---------|--|
| 1 2 3 4 | I understand that my teaching is an response to a call from God. |
| 1 2 3 4 | I know I never enter a classroom alone, for God is always present with me. |
| 1 2 3 4 | I understand that one of my primary roles as a teacher is to model the Christian faith to the best of my ability. |
| 1 2 3 4 | I believe the role of a teacher is not only to share information, but also to create an environment where God can transform us into the people God wants us to be. |
| 1 2 3 4 | I understand how the primary task of the local congregation relates to my role as a teacher. |
| 1 2 3 4 | I know that people prefer different learning styles and I am able to incorporate these different styles into my lesson plan. |
| 1 2 3 4 | I use a wide variety of methods in my teaching and I am able to adapt them to the preference of my class. |
| 1 2 3 4 | I can help others make connections between their experience and the Bible and the Christian heritage. |
| 1 2 3 4 | The way I teach is aligned with my understanding of God, Jesus, the Holy Spirit, and the church. |
| 1 2 3 4 | I know I have the power to influence others and I use this power wisely. |
| 1 2 3 4 | As a teacher, I listen to students in order to know what and how to teach. |
| 1 2 3 4 | I use a variety of classroom management techniques as a way to manage discipline issues. |
| 1 2 3 4 | I know what curriculum my congregation uses and understand why we use it. |
| 1 2 3 4 | I know how to plan and teach using the curriculum my church provides for me. |
| 1 2 3 4 | I know who to call on in my local church for obtaining the curriculum I need. |
| 1 2 3 4 | I know where to go for more information on curriculum and on how to use it. |

- 1 2 3 4 I match my teaching methods to the learning styles of my group.
- 1 2 3 4 I know what basic supplies are needed for the age group I teach.

Circle the one that comes closest to describing you. The values of the numbers are as follows:

1-no or never
2-seldom or tend not to
3-I am unsure
4-sometimes or tend to
5-yes or always

- 1 2 3 4 5 I study each lesson for my own benefit before preparing it for the class.
- 1 2 3 4 5 I am aware of the goal of each lesson I teach.
- 1 2 3 4 5 I begin preparation early in the week.
- 1 2 3 4 5 I spend two or more hours per week in lesson preparation.
- 1 2 3 4 5 I use a variety of visual aids in the presentation of the lesson.
- 1 2 3 4 5 I can handle conflict openly and constructively.
- 1 2 3 4 5 I can see someone else's point of view.
- 1 2 3 4 5 I react well to unexpected situations.
- 1 2 3 4 5 I help others discover strengths and how to use them.

APPENDIX B
POST-SURVEY

POST TRAINING SURVEY AND EVALUATION FORM

1. As a result of the training, do you have a better understanding about your calling to teach? Yes ___ No ___

Comments: _____

2. As a result of the training, do you feel that you will be more effective in your teaching? Yes ___ No ___

Comments: _____

3. Or, do you still feel that you need more training? Yes ___ No ___

Comments: _____

4. After the training, do you understand your role as an educator? Yes ___ No ___

Comments: _____

5. Was the training beneficial to you? Yes ___ No ___

Comments: _____

6. Were the participant's needs addressed in the training? Yes ___ No ___

Comments: _____

7. Do you feel that the church will benefit from the training? Yes ___ No ___

Comments: _____

APPENDIX C
LETTER OF PARTICIPATION

Wesley Chapel United Methodist Church
397 Racetrack Road
McDonough, Georgia 30253

Date: March 31, 2006
To: Members of the Christian Education Ministry
From: Rev. Patricia A. Robinson
Subject: Participation in Christian Education Training Project
Scriptures: Matthew 28:19-20 (NIV) and Ephesians 4:11

Dear Members of the Christian Education Ministry:

I have shared with Pastor Williams, Christian Education Ministry, and the Administrative Council since I enrolled into the Doctor of Ministry program in August 2004, which I was in the process of developing a project in accordance with the requirements of United Theological Seminary's (UTS) Doctor of Ministry Degree Program, Dayton, Ohio. After prayer and reflection with some of the members of Christian Education Ministry, I have focused my project on helping educators become more effective in their teaching roles and to enhance their classroom management skills. Within the past year, our faith community has changed due to the increase of members coming from other denominations, more children from the community at large, and an influx of families who are looking for strong teaching ministry.

Keeping in compliance with the requirements of UTS, only persons who have taught or are currently teaching in the Teaching Ministry at Wesley Chapel are allowed to participate in the project training and the participants must be members of Wesley Chapel.

Please complete the attached preliminary forms and the Agreement Form to confirm your participation in this project. After, training is completed; please complete the Post Training Survey. In addition, the agreement will ensure that all information shared will be kept confidential.

Thank you for agreeing to share in this project with me and also becoming a model for training Christian educators.

APPENDIX D
PARTICIPANT AGREEMENT FORM

I, _____, have
agreed to participate in the implementation and training of the Doctor of Ministry Project
at Wesley Chapel United Methodist Church in McDonough, Georgia. I understand and
agree that my name will not appear in any documents or writings by the Project Facilitator
without my permission.

APPENDIX E
HANDOUTS

THE SEVEN LAWS OF TEACHING
by
John Milton Gregory

1. The Law of the Teacher

- Teacher must be fully equipped with the knowledge they wish to communicate
- Fresh study and preparation are keys to enriched teaching.

2. The Law of the Learner

- The teacher must generate student's interest and attention.
- A teacher's enthusiasm is contagious with students.

3. The Law of the Lesson

- Lessons are best begun with common and familiar experiences.
- Excellent teachers understand the background of their pupils and use it as a starting point.

4. The Law of the Language

- Students must easily understand the words used by teachers.
- Illustrations, natural objects, and visual aids are important to good communication.

5. The Law of the Teaching Process

- Expert teachers arouse and direct self-activities by their students, thus stimulating them to learn for themselves.
- Student's skills grow with practical exercises involving their minds.

6. The Law of the Learning Process

- Excellent education helps learners to be investigative discoverers.
- Real and valuable learning is more than memorization.

7. The Law of Review and Application

- Review perfects knowledge, confirms knowledge, and makes knowledge ready and useful.
- Practical reviews are characteristic of excellent teachers.

Ten Curriculum Decisions Teachers Must Make

1. What will I teach?

- ☐ The curriculum is a starting place, but there is too much.
- ☐ I must select the key concepts to focus my teaching.
- ☐ Concepts are words that persons use to represent experience, thoughts to communicate with others.
- ☐ Concepts are the focus of all teaching.
- ☐ It is important to relate concepts to the life-experience of the students.

2. What will the students learn?

- ☐ It is important for teachers to have specific objectives in mind toward which they direct their planning and teaching.
- ☐ Objectives express what teachers intend for the students to achieve in a period of instruction.
- ☐ Objectives help the teacher to evaluate what happened.

3. What teaching activities will I plan for the session?

- ☐ Teaching activities should represent different levels of interest and ability.
- ☐ New activities should be introduced and tried out regularly.

4. What resources will the students and I use?

- ☐ Resources are those means by which students get involved to participate in their own learning.
- ☐ A wide variety of resources should be used.

5. What strategy will I use to motivate students to be involved?

- ☐ It takes a carefully worked out strategy to engage the students with interest and purpose in their study.
- ☐ There are at least five elements to the strategy, which include Opening, Presentation, Exploration, Creativity, and Closing.

6. How will the room be arranged?

- ☐ The room arrangement, decoration, and display of resources teach as much as the words we use. Allow for maximum visibility of all materials and easy movement of all students.

7. What questions will I ask?

- ☐ It will help to plan key questions ahead of time.
- ☐ There are at least three levels of questions to use, which include Information, Analytical, and Personal questions.

8. What choices will the students make during the session?

- ☐ Choices need to be discussed and evaluated
- ☐ Choices need to be considered for every step of the lesson plan.

9. What direction will I give?

_The success of students in the learning activities is often determined by the kinds of directions the teacher gives.

_Directions should be visible as well as verbal.

_Directions should be given in several steps.

10. How will I respond after a student says or does something?

_A teacher's reinforcement of students leads to great participation by the students.

_Students need to receive feedback or responses from their teachers.

A COMPREHENSIVE LESSON PLAN

by
Findley B. Edge

- I. General Preparation
 1. The teacher's preparation of him/herself-in mind and spirit
 - (1) Through Bible study
 - (2) Through prayer
 - (3) Through meditation-What has this truth (in the lesson to be taught) meant to me in my personal experience?
 2. What am I to teach?
 - (1) Study carefully the suggested Scripture passage including the larger lesson
 - (2) Use commentaries and other lesson helps
 3. Who am I to teach?
 - (1) General information concerning class members
 - (2) Specific information concerning class members
 - a. What need or needs do my class members have that is met by this lesson?
 - b. What interests do my class members have that I can use to stimulate interest in the study of this lesson?
- II. A Lesson Plan
 1. What is my aim for the quarter?
 2. What is my aim for this unit?
 3. What is my aim for this lesson?
 - (1) A good aim ought to be:
 - a. Brief enough to be remembered
 - b. Clear enough to be written down
 - c. Specific enough to be attainable
 - (2) What kind of aim do I desire?
 - a. Do I desire a knowledge aim?
 - b. Do I desire an inspiration aim?
 - c. Do I desire a conduct response aim?
 4. How shall I secure purposeful Bible study? Do I read the Bible in the class until the class members have been stimulated and prepared to read it.
 - (1) How shall I capture the interest of the group at the beginning of the lesson?
 - (2) How shall I direct this interest toward a desire to read or study the Bible?
 - (3) How shall I seek to insure that the reading of the Bible will be purposeful and meaningful?
 - (4) What questions shall I ask the class in order to direct their study as they read the Scripture?
 - (5) How shall I lead in the discussion of the questions after the Scripture has been read?

5. How shall I develop the lesson so as to lead the class to accept and follow my aim for the lesson?
 - (1) What suggested materials shall I use?
 - (2) What suggested material will I have to leave out? (The aim that the teacher has in mind will determine this.)
 - (3) What other material that is not suggested shall I use?
 - (4) How shall I organize this material so that it will be in harmony with the needs and interests of my class members?
 - (5) What questions shall I ask?
 - (6) What problems shall I pose for the class to solve?
 - (7) What method or methods shall I use?
6. How shall I make this lesson personal?
 - (1) How shall I lead the class to feel that this spiritual truth affects their lives today?
 - (2) How shall I help them to see certain situations in their lives in which this spiritual truth would apply?
 - (3) How shall I lead them to the conviction that this truth is not only right, but that they should follow it in practice?
7. How shall I secure carry-over?
 - (1) How shall I seek to insure that what I teach will not die in the classroom?
 - a. Carry-over must be planned for.
 - b. Conclusions must be unhurried. Adequate time must be left for this part of the lesson.
 - c. It must be the class members' conclusions. Lead them to suggest ways for the carry-over.
 - (2) What specific plans for this carry-over should be made?
 - (3) What plan do I have to test whether or not any carry-over was made?
8. How shall I stimulate interest in the study of next Sunday's lesson?

OBJECTIVES ARE:

1. Attainable
2. Challenging
3. Meaningful
4. Measurable
5. Specific

LEARNING STYLES

Purpose: Natural Learning Cycle has a pattern for structuring a lesson that will allow each student an opportunity to do his or her best.

Natural Learning Process|:

Step I: Collaborative Learners

These are learners who begin with what they already know or feel or need, easily sharing from their past experiences. They make connections with their lives outside of the classroom and bring those connections into class for everyone to discuss and examine.

Step 2: Analytic Learners

These learners enjoys answering questions such as “What new things do we need to know?” or “What does the Bible say about this issue?”

Steps 3: Common Sense Learners

These learners build on what has gone before. They know why the subject they are studying is important and they know what the Bible has to say about it.

Steps 4: Dynamic Learners

These learners will lead the whole class in finding creative ways of using what they have learned in the classroom.

MODALITIES:

1. Auditory Learners

These learners need to hear the information.

2. Visual Learners

These learners may learn best seeing.

3. Tactile/Kinesthetic Learners

Tactile refers to a sense of touch. Kinesthetic refers to large body movement that would be used in miming or playing kick ball.

THE TEACHING PRINCIPLES OF JESUS

1. Jesus' teaching was authoritative

Jesus taught as one who had authority and His authority was authenticated by the content of his teaching and by who he was as a person. The content of his teaching was the revelation of God, for he spoke with the words of God the Father.

2. Jesus' teaching was not authoritarian

Jesus' teaching was not forced or imposed upon his hearers. Jesus specified the costs and demands of discipleship and encouraged his followers to make personal commitments of their choosing. Once having delivered the message, he allowed the individual to confront the truth and come to his or her own conclusions.

3. Jesus' teaching encouraged people to think

Jesus stimulated serious thought and reflection in his teaching content. He expected his hearers to carefully consider their response to the truths he shared. Jesus expected his students to search their minds and hearts in relation to his teachings and to consider the realities of life. He encouraged others to think for himself/herself. Jesus posed questions and allowed for questioning.

4. Jesus lived what he taught

Jesus incarnated his message faithfully in his life and ministry, before commanding his disciples to serve and love one another as he had loved them. Also, Jesus demonstrated the full extent of his love by washing his disciples' feet. He then further demonstrated his love by laying down his life for his friends.

5. Jesus had a love for those he taught

Jesus loved his students, his disciples, in a way that indicated the deep longings of every heart for an intimate relationship with another person and with God.

Checking Myself As A Teacher
By
Findley B. Edge

| | Excellent | Very Good | Good | Fair | Poor |
|---|-----------|-----------|------|------|------|
| Regular in Attendance | | | | | |
| On Time | | | | | |
| Begin Preparation of Lesson the First of the Week | | | | | |
| Pupil Information Notebook | | | | | |
| Visit Each Member Once a Month | | | | | |
| Follow a Systematic Plan of Bible Study | | | | | |
| Daily Devotions | | | | | |
| Definite Plan for Improving My Teaching | | | | | |
| Growing Christian Experience | | | | | |

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